

32 L.d.
T A L E S, 34

Translated from the

Inayat Allah

Persian of INATULLA of DELHI. K.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT,
in the Strand.

M D C C L X V I I I .

23

T A L E S

Translated from the

French of J. B. de La Harpe



L O N D O N

Printed by J. B. de La Harpe

in the Strand

MDCCLXXIII

P R E F A C E.

THE many attempts made in Europe to imitate the eastern manner of writing, by men totally unacquainted with the literature of Asia, induced the translator of the following tales to present the public with a genuine specimen of oriental composition, as nearly as the very different idioms

a

of

of the English and Persian languages would permit. Had he endeavoured to make the diction more consonant to his own ideas of propriety and elegance, the characteristical manner of the original would probably have evaporated in his hands. He therefore chose rather to shew what the oriental stile really is, than to substitute any thing of his own in its place.

Originality and novelty are perhaps the greatest merit of this work. The faults of Inatulla are many: but it is not the province of the translator

translator to point them out. His readers will, no doubt, take that trouble off his hands: but had the tales been thought altogether destitute of beauty, they would probably have still remained in the obscurity of the Persian tongue. The language of the translation will, perhaps, be thought too florid and diffuse by men accustomed to the succinct and nervous manner of the ancients, and that concise elegance, which distinguishes many writers of modern Europe. But whatever liberties have been taken with the

English language, in order to bend it to the Persian idiom, the translator can aver, that he has retrenched many of the redundancies of his author.

Inatulla uses the pompous diction peculiar to the East, even in his most familiar and ludicrous tales. In some of them, the translator found it necessary to reduce his author's ideas into common language. But as the species of wit contained in them depends very much upon the idiom of the Persian, he is as little satisfied with his translation, as
he

he is with the subject of the stories themselves. . .

It appears that Inatulla was not the inventor of the tales which he introduces as episodes, and ingrafts upon a story of his own forming. They were taken from the writings of the Brahmins, and it were to be wished he had retained that simplicity of thought and language which is peculiar to the compositions of those philosophers.

The severity with which our author treats the fair sex stands in need of an apology. The British ladies

ladies will, no doubt, see with pleasure, how superior their own virtue is to that of the fair sex in India, though the latter are immured within harems and guarded by the watchful eyes of eunuchs. There is a strange perversity in human nature : it rises up in arms against all restraint ; and perhaps the best guardian of the chastity of wives is unbounded confidence from the husbands.

The translator chose his author, more from accident than design. Inatulla was put into his hands when he was learning the Persian,

rather on account of his metaphorical expressions and variety of diction, than for his reputation as a writer in the East. The grave Mohomedans of India think him too free in his expressions in some of the tales ; a censure which he will probably incur in this country, though great care has been taken in the translation not to offend decency. At any rate it is to be hoped his moral tales will make up for the levity of his ludicrous stories ; and that, upon the whole, Inatulla will afford some entertainment.

[H]

The Author INATULA

TO
THE READER.

TO the liberal patrons of science, to the ornaments of the society of knowledge; to the descendants of the sun of genius, whose minds are enlightened like the morning, be it known, That in the days of joy and festivity, in the temperate season of
VOL. I. A delight,

delight, when by the benign influence of the king of stars the teeming earth was cloathed in green, embroidered with bright clusters of flowers, the envy of the constellations, I walked forth with a few chearful companions, from the tumultuous waves of business into the calm of rural retirement, to recreate the mind with the prospect of vernal beauty.

There I beheld the cup-bearers of the sky ^r, from the fountain of benevolence, pouring forth bounty profuse on the exhilarated family of May, and the earth in full pride,

^r The clouds.

intoxi-

[iii]

intoxicated by the draught, disclosing without reserve the secrets of her swelling bosom. There I beheld the painter of the year² displaying his variegated fancies on his leafy tablets, and, with the pencil of power dipped in the æthereal bow, writing the lessons of wisdom divine on the fair forehead of blooming Nature. There the rosy-finger'd Spring, by the liquid mirror of a chrystalline pool, was attiring her fair daughters in seven-fold ornaments, while the love-whispering breezes stole kisses as they passed, and fanned their glowing beauties.

² The sun.

A 2

From

From the warmth of the vital ray the little blossoms on every tree threw off their winter garments, and the infant buds of the Spring from ruby cups sipped with joy the balmy dew. The leaves of the forest were loaded with manna, pure amber dropped from every bough, honey distilled from the rifted rock, and the humming bee, drunk with joy, strayed from flower to flower, forgetful of his bursting cells.

Sweeter than the musk of Tartar³, the morning breeze from the navel of every flower ravished per-

³ Tartary.

fume. The breath of the mountain heifer was fragrant as the gales of Sirendiep ⁴, by feeding on spicy herbs. The mouth of the frisking antelope was red like the bill of the pert, loquacious parrot, by cropping the purple meads.

Tremulous on the bladed grass shone bright the pearly drops, like an assembly of sparkling stars dancing on the plains of the zodiac; vocal was every bending spray, every reed was inspired, each warbling throat seemed to emulate the melodious voice of the bird of a thousand songs ⁵.

⁴ Ceylon.

⁵ The nightingale.

The lofty mountains rose faint to the sight and lost their foreheads in the distant skies : the little hills, cloathed in darker green and skirted with embroidered vales, discovered the secret haunts of kids and bounding roes. The plain appears like paradise restored, where the proud cypress and tall aracca seem walking by the margin of the passing stream. The infant buds, impatient to look around them, rend their green garments and unfold their eyes ; while every tree, on which the bulbul ⁶ sings, flutters with joy on the wings of their thousand leaves.

⁶ The wood-lark, sometimes used for the nightingale.

The

The spring displaying her elegant taste, the proud walk of the gold-feathered pheasant, the light tread of the small-hoofed hind, and the dancing of the star-trained peacock, infused joy into the soul of the spectator of the astonishing works of the Creator; insomuch, that his heart, which from misfortune lay before shrunk like a flower in the bud, was now happily expanded, and the capacious cup of desire filled with the wine of pleasure.

Some admired the external beauties of the objects they beheld, like the nightingale in love with the rose; some enchanted by the con-

cert around, like Suphys ⁷ delighting in madness, tossed the cup of exultation into the skies; while others, of wisdom more sound, investigated the utility, perfection, and greatness of the designs of nature, till, from the beauty of the picture, they adored the hand of the artist, and quenched their thirst in the cup of knowledge from the sacred fountain of truth.

The senses, formed to enjoy pleasure but for a time, became languid, when, wandering from my companions, I stretched myself down on the fallen blossoms of a mango-grove, where sleep delayed

⁷ Suphys are a sect of mad philosophers.

not long to shut the gates of light,
nor did fancy fail to entertain the
mind with incorporeal visions.

Methought our company formed
a circle on the grass, and were bu-
sied each according to his genius
in writing a description of the scenes
they beheld; when, lo, a young
maid advanced towards us of such
exquisite beauty and form, that a
devotee of true faith would have
worshipped the divinities which
beamed in the arched temples of
her eyes, and wish to wear the
zinar⁸, if woven of her ambrosial
hair. Dark curling locks rolled

⁸ The zinar is a string of amulets wore by
the Hindows round their necks.

down

down her snowy neck in simbol⁹ wreaths, while, in envy of her foul-deluding countenance, the rising moon contracting her beams, like an inferior star, twinkled on the plain of the horizon.

But how can I describe the delicate symmetry of her ivory limbs, the fair hemispheres of her panting bosom, the soft polish of her silver hands, and taper beauties of her coral fingers¹⁰, that, like the rod of Moses, were pregnant with enchantment? or what shall I say of

⁹ Simbol is a kind of black twining aromatic grass.

¹⁰ The Indian ladies dye their fingers red,

those

those twin rose-buds of her sweet mouth that, smiling, disclosed a row of pearls, which seemed as ranged in a crimson casket? On her forehead sat beauty in a sun-beam garment, and love emptying his quiver from the bows of her sparkling eyes : her stature was the most tall and delicate tree nourished in the garden of love, and her flowing robes of the purest white washed in the seven fountains of the sun.

So majestic was her walk, that the pheasant of the forest would die to imitate, and the peacock languish to behold her : she slowly approached us ; upon which all
my

my companions, who had been lavishing their praise upon the streams, the birds, and the meads, at once broke their pen¹¹, directing their eyes towards her, like sun-flowers to the meridian ray; while a glory encircled her presence, like a halo round the moon. For a moment she beheld us with the eyes of life, then she began to pour pearls of heart-pleasing eloquence and jewels of inestimable wisdom into the lap of attention.

“ To be enamoured with the
 “ painted brides of the mead, trans-

¹¹ An oriental expression for giving up one theme and passing to another.

“ ported

"ported with external beauty, and
 "captivated by the vernal choir,
 "is a weakness unworthy of rea-
 "son, and from wisdom far re-
 "moved. What is the tulip of a
 "week's duration? what the song
 "of a sunshine hour? what availeth
 "it to give the heart into the hand
 "of ingratitude, or to fix the soul
 "upon that which remaineth
 "not?"

"Of all gardens that of rheto-
 "ric justly challenges the highest
 "fame. It knoweth no winter,
 "and its flowers, like those of the
 "jeweller, ever retain their beauty
 "and intrinsic worth; and were
 "the incense of the Persian tongue
 "burnt

“ burnt on the Indian altar, the
 “ world would be perfumed with
 “ agla ¹², and the lovers of sublime
 “ diction anointed as with the oil
 “ of roses.”

Thus saying, she disappeared,
 shedding fragrance around. —
 I awoke in amaze, and mourned
 the absence of the daughter of

¹² Agla is an Indian tree of a moderate height, producing a white flower very fragrant, from which they extract a perfume. From the knots of the same tree they also extract an odoriferous gum, which serves the purpose of incense, the oily part of which is used as one of the compositions in otter of roses, which we have translated oil of roses, above: otter is a corruption of the Shansecrit word Obatar, which signifies Essence.

paradise.

paradise. But these words being deeply engraved on the table of memory, occasioned your humble slave INATULA, selector of the beauties of eloquence, and gleaner of the harvest of wit, to collect the fairest flowers dropt from the lap of fancy to adorn the glossy locks of rhetoric which fly loose to the effenced air.

Hoping therefore that the magnanimous sons of true genius will be the nutritive elements of my labour, and that they will veil the defects of this bashful bride of imagination with the gracious skirts of their favour; it concerns me not, if the low-minded, espying a fault,
should

should give a loose to their tongue in the black field of calumny, like voracious panthers thirsting for the blood of the timorous hind; for it is known that the sculptor of the human frame wrote ERROR upon his forehead.

Since, then, I write with a design to please, let not my faults awaken your bitter spleen. If greater parts have fallen to your share from above, correct my thoughts, and mould them to the pleasure of your more exalted minds; if your genius should be low, expose not your own weakness by shewing mine.

The

The true judges of the refinements of stile, and embellishers of the temple of knowledge, know how much of the blood of the liver is poured forth, how the recesses of the brain are explored, and how deeply the mind must be searched, in obtaining the golden ore of poetry, and that not one pearl worthy of the king of science can see the sun, without diving a thousand times into the ocean of thought.

THE
BAAR DANESH;
OR,
Garden of Knowledge.

CHAP. I.

THE breakers of the telifms^a which guard the treasure of knowledge, and the withdrawers of the veil of antient history, rescued the following tales from the teeth of devouring time, and now,

^a Charms, enchantments, or magical delusions, commonly wrote in Europe talismans.

ressed in modern ornaments, the descriptive pen once more presents them upon the leaves of explanation.

In the paradisial regions of Hindostan there once reigned a king, who, like the world-ruling sun, comprehended the earth in the circle of his command, and with the bright torch of his justice enlightened the nations: his throne was in radiance like the bow of heaven, upon which, pre-eminent in majesty, he sat without observing the sceptered potentates of the earth more than atoms in the beams of his presence. He fixed the rings of subjection ^b in the ears of Fortune, and made the Spring spreader of the carpets of his pleasure. Time gave the reins of his party-coloured

^b Rings in the ears are badges of slavery among the Mahommedans.

courfers^c into his hand, and Pride laid the head of obsequiousness upon the threshold of his door of audience.

His will was law : Fate waited upon his commands. The world attended his steps : Victory bore on high his standard ; while Death before him lifted up his tremendous spear.

But in the house of his prosperity, the light, which is the hope of descending life^d, beamed not ; as the blossoms of his love^e produced not the fruit of his wishes : for which he made grief his companion, and sat lonely, like a point in the center of the circle of sorrow. He beseeched the Almighty, day and night, that the chain of succession might de-

^c Meaning night and day.

^d A figure to express the king's having no children.

^e The ladies of the seraglio.

scend, and the pearl-string of royalty be continued.

His unwearied petitions found at length grace in the celestial auditory; and his aged eyes were blessed with a ray of paternal hope. For lo, the bright star of royalty, attended by a thousand happy omens, was seen to rise, gilding the face of a rejoicing world, and illuminating the chambers of love.

Now the happy king laid the forehead of thanksgiving upon the dust of gratitude; he opened the doors of his wealth to the four winds, and enriched the world, at once, with his munificence. The thirst of avarice was, for the first time, quenched in the river of generosity, and the beggar, forgetful of his crutch, danced in the pride of independence.

This

This inestimable pearl^f, in a happy hour, was named Jehandar^g; and a chaste nurse of wakeful fortune^h, for the nurture of the royal plant, had her head exalted. When he had reposed four years and four months in the bosom of care, rocked in the cradle of prosperity, he was brought forth, according to the custom of true believers, and committed to the charge of moralists of high fame, polishers of noble manners, and searchers of true knowledge, that they might cultivate his heaven-born genius, and teach him with dignity to rule that world which he was born to command by the sword of au-

^f The young prince.

^g Ruler of the world.

^h That is, that her fortune was watchful, otherwise she should not have arrived at that dignity.

thority, the robe of favorⁱ, and balance of justice divine.

Scarce fourteen fleeting years had waved their golden wings over his blessed head, when he was accomplished in the secrets of science, and experienced in the perfections of art. The propriety of manners, the rectitude of thought, the extent of knowledge, and greatness of mind, displayed by this prince of mankind, became the theme of unwearyed fame; to which, when we add a consummate proportion of shape, genteel deportment, strength of body, and a majesty which bespoke his illustrious birth, we have a faint idea of the youth, whose fame rode in triumph upon the

ⁱ It is the custom in eastern courts, when great men are introduced, to present them with a dress and suit of arms called a Chelat.

four winds, and proclaimed him the wonder of the world.

As war and rebellion lay chained by the foot of his father's throne, the disposition of this sultan, illustrious as Keiwan^k, turned upon the love of hunting, so that many of his youthful hours were spent in that noble sport. He, one day, according to custom, mounted his air-treading steed, turning to the chace of the long-bounding measurers of the forest^l, and wing-beating travelers of the unbounded air. The hawk of light wing, sprightly as the virgins of Singol, struck the golden-winged pheasant and lovely-eyed partridge fluttering to the ground. The green-eyed panther, unsheathing his claws, gored the

^k One of the antient kings of Persia:

^l Deer.

throat of the roaring mountain-bull; and the steel-hearted leopard, like fate, instantaneous, threw the high-bounding antelope bleeding on the earth. Nor was the hills and the woods deaf to the challenging neighing of proud-prancing steeds, and the loud opening of the gale-pursuing hounds.

Among the concourse of omrahs who attended the stirrup of royalty, Jewan Sadit^m stood as unrivaled in favor as he was in nobility and worth. He was the constant companion of the prince's pleasures, and the repository of the secrets of his soul. This rendered him the envy of the courtiers, though in accomplishments the ornament of the court; in particular Budbucht^m, an

^m The virtuous youth.

^m The mischievous.

amir ° of a grovelling soul, with the green eye of jealousy viewed him, and fed on the gall of malice, which was discharged on his own faithless heart.

Dreading the prowess of Sadit, yet desirous to accomplish his end, Budbucht had resolved the means in his dark mind, and made the generous quality of Sadit the ground of his wicked design. He for this purpose had previously informed himself of the haunt of a royal tiger, of strength so enormous that, with a blow of his broad paw, he could fracture the scull of the furious buffalo, and bear him, like a kid, to his den.

To this thicket, by various stratagems, he found means to turn the chace; the monster, roused by the

° Amir or omrah signifies a prince.

noise, started forward, presented such a visage of horror, and raised such a hideous roar, that the hearts of the bold were contracted, and the nerves of the valiant unstrung. The limbs of the frightened steeds could scarce bear them from the field of terror, and the hounds, with drooping tails, yelled as they fled from danger.

But the eye of the prince took fire, and valour swelled in his breast, so that raising his bright spear he spurred his horse towards the terror of the forest, as joyful as to the timorous deer.

Jewan Sadit, who stood before the prince, observing his youthful temerity, threw himself between him and danger, and with a nervous arm, wielding a sharp sabre, of the hard tempered steel of Damisk^p, rushing upon the tyger,

^p Damascus.

struck

struck him across the forehead. But the blade, by the force of the blow, fell glittering in fragments on the ground.

The torch-eyed savage, with growl tremendous, rising up, dislocated at one blow the arched neck of Sadi's Arabian steed, and brought the unfortunate omrah to the dust, expiring between his extended claws.

The generous soul of the prince being inflamed by revenge, he lifted up his spear, then meditating a deathful blow, forced on his snorting steed, and, deep in the tiger's large crest, buried his deadly weapon.

The son of terror at one gnash devoured the crashing wood of the spear, then collecting all his strength, he growled like distant thunder, and, fastening on the horse behind, held him fast with the paws of destruction. But
the

the active sultan, bounding from his horse, drew his sword from his manly thigh, and with one blow dividing the spinal marrow, stretched him in death on the field.

Now the high cupola of heaven was rent with loud acclamations; for the pale courtiers, crowding around with all the interjections of amaze, extolled the mighty feat and the prodigious size of the tiger! But the prince viewing them with eyes of disdain, raising, at the same time, his dead friend in his arms, searched for his bleeding wounds, and thus turned their joy to a strain of sorrow.

“ Brave partner of my heart,” said he, “ though thy body was subject to death, thy soul was invincible to danger. Like double pomegranates we were united in friendship, but now
“ thou

" thou art torn from my side. Nerve-
 " less is the arm of vigor, cold is the
 " breast of friendship, extinct is the
 " fire of youth! Why was I not per-
 " mitted to embrace danger rather than
 " to suffer a greater misfortune by thy
 " death? Yet why do I chide thy te-
 " merity, I was the only cause of thy
 " fall? If I cannot inspire thee with
 " the breath of my lips, yet can I wash
 " thy wounds with my tears."

Thus mourned the generous prince
 over his departed friend, while the cour-
 tiers joined in the lamentation: but the
 treacherous voice of Budbucht was
 heard above those of his companions.

By the command of the prince, the body
 was laid in his own pallangky^a, carried

^a A kind of litter, commonly called a pellan-
 queen: the word is properly the diminutive of
 pallang, which signifies a bed.

homeward in mournful procession, and with great funeral pomp buried in the area of the Musgid Jama'.

Such are the ills which attend those who attain to the favors of the great ! but few are they, who to the last have found the friendship of a prince so permanent and true.

† The royal chapel.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

THE prince, whose passions were violent, as the blasts of the north, mourned for some time the loss of his beloved friend, and was deaf to the voice of pleasure. But at length, the mist of sorrow began to dissipate, and a ray of serenity and pleasure to gild the calm surface of his mind.

One morning, in process of time, as he rode forth to enjoy the beauties of the season, and to breathe the healthful air as soon as the golden-winged griffin of day, in the sapphire fields of heaven, exalted his ardent flight, and bird and beast, panting at the heart, retired to the

cooling shade, he espied a beautiful garden, at which he alighted to enjoy an hour's relaxation, in a bower shaded with the cinnamon tree.

By the bank of a purling stream he beheld a comely youth, carelessly reclining his head against the aged trunk of a tamirhind. On his arm a beautiful parrot chattered a pleasant song. Moved with curiosity at the uncommon capacity of this green-coated prattler of the wood, he advanced towards the boy ; upon which the parrot immediately took wing, and perching upon the prince's shoulder, began, as it fluttered with joy, to nibble at the roses of his lips.

Astonished at this familiarity, the prince demanded the price of the bird ; to which the grumbling boy made no reply ; but, with signs of discontent, stretched

stretched forth his open hand to seize the beautiful fugitive.

The prince, smiling at his disrespectful behaviour, said, "Young man, thou knowest me not; for that reason I readily excuse thy presumption; take this jewel, the price of a thousand birds; for my soul despiseth oppression." The boy accepted the present, but retired with tears in his eyes; when the prince, with the bird in his hand, returned pleased to the chambers of prosperity. Here he presented him to Mherpirwir*, one of his favorite blossoms, fair as the queen of the Pirri s†.

* The nourisher of love.

† Intermediate beings who are said to inhabit the air and answer to what we call fairies, which possibly may be derived from the above word.

The lady received him with joy, and affectedly chiding his absence, ran tit-tering into the apartments of pleasure. Thither the sultan, transported, pursued her; for the elements of his life were fermented with the honey of delight, sucked from the moist roses of her fragrant lips, and his mind half distracted by the influence of her crescent brows, bending over the twins of the zodiac. But alas! in the smiling season of love, the thin painted wings of vanity were unfolded in the air of pride; and this butterfly of a sun-shine hour, flustered with the wine of royal favor, was soon chilled by the frost of disdain. Beholding her charms in the glass, she wandered over a wilderness of vain fancies. She at length became enamoured of her self, and made the shallow cup of conceit overflow with the froth of

of folly ; and thus, in an infortunate hour, addressed her royal admirer :

“ Divine receptacle of excellence, let
 “ it not be deemed impertinent, or de-
 “ viating from the rules of propriety,
 “ if I propound one question which
 “ now labours in my breast ; assuring
 “ me first, you will not let the scepter
 “ of true judgment depart from your
 “ right hand.”

Without waiting for a reply, she thus proceeded, calling forth all her charms :

“ Do you think, really, O prince,
 “ that the unparalleled Painter of na-
 “ ture”, on the scenes of creation, ever
 “ drew such another picture of grace,
 “ symmetry, and beauty, as you now
 “ behold ?”

The prince astonished at the superla-
 tive vanity of this fair deceiver, made

“ God.

no reply; but the parrot, who had been listening to their discourse, burst out into a loud laugh.

The vain daughter of beauty, struck with the reproof, shrunk up like a flower nipped by the blast of the north, and the signs of discontent began to darken the lustre of her polished brow; yet with well-dissembled wantonness, seizing with the hand of sport the skirts of the prince; she, laughing, enquired what that chattering magpie meant? "If you cannot guess, perhaps the bird himself may inform you, Madam," said the sultan, who was withdrawing to the grand durbar^w. The trembling parrot, seeing him about to depart, while fury lightened in the lady's eyes, beating the sides of his cage with his

^w The audience chamber.

wings,

wings, cried out; " O prince, leave,
 " leave not thy unfortunate friend,
 " Jewan Sadit, the victim of a woman's
 " revenge !"

The sultan turning about in amaze, perceived with joy that the soul of his beloved companion had associated with the nature of this beautiful handful of existence; and running towards him, stroaked his glossy feathers and kissed his crimson bill; while the grateful bird nestled in his bosom, exhibiting every sign of delight.

The curiosity of the lady was highly inflamed, to know the history of the parrot's transmigration, which she intreated the bird with all her eloquence to relate; but he presented a deaf ear to her importunity, and, like a painted nightingale, remained silent. At length she prevailed on the prince to impose

his absolute commands, when the unwilling bird began to break the seal of secrecy from the narrative of his fate.

HISTORY

CHAP III.

History of the PARROT.

MAGNANIMOUS protector of the world; it is no secret to your enlightened mind, that there are three great principles in nature; intellect, life, and matter. The first producing all the mental faculties; the second, vital motion; and the third, the five elements, earth, water, fire, air, and akash*, of which all bodies are composed, animate and inanimate; by a

* A pure element or æther, according to the Brahmin Philosophy.

certain

certain plasticity in the atoms, impressed by the Intelligent Principle.

Now when the vital principle assumes to itself a body of fire, air, and akash, it becomes what we call spirit or soul, and is endued with perception and the activity of thought in its motions. The atoms of which all animals are formed, are contained in the grosser elements of earth and water; souls are afterwards associated with them for the purposes of generation, and various creatures are produced according to the species to which they are respectively annexed. But as these bodies are subject to a dissolution called death, the soul returns to its former state; and if it has inhabited a body endued with rational faculties, it becomes accountable for its actions, and is destined to heaven or hell, for a certain time, in proportion to

to its merits or crimes; but if its crimes are not in the extreme, it is destined to animate another creature of an inferior degree, till in the course of providence it again inspires the body of a man: if then its actions are perfectly virtuous, it is absorbed in the divine essence, divested of all body, where it remains to all eternity, unconscious both of pleasure and pain.

In this manner the soul of your faithful slave was, after death, associated with the body of a parrot; and having passed through the course of regeneration, was pleased with its happy state, but soon found that all creatures on earth are surrounded with the thorns of care, and gnawed by the caustic of sorrow.

When

When my little wings were fledged, and endued with sufficient strength to bear me in safety through the air, with a flock of my chattering companions, I strayed among the fields and the gardens, revelling among the sugar plantations, and devouring the most delicious blossoms, rocked in the cradle of spring.

When the season of love approached, I made love to a virgin bride, whose wings were tipped with gold, and her head crowned with sapphire. Her coyness was conquered by assiduity, and at last she consented to resign the treasure of her charms to my passion.

With mutual toil, and intuitive dexterity, we built our commodious habitation in the hollow of a mango tree, that the fruit, which was then in blossom, might subsist our young. But no sooner

was

was our happiness almost compleat, by the view of a beautiful progeny, than a hideous snake, twining his scaly length around the trunk of the tree, wound himself up; and, directed to the nest by their cries, devoured them one by one, in sight of their fluttering parents.

My consort was inconsolable for her offspring, and for some days sat moping like an owl, over the ruins of the palace of pleasure, while I endeavoured in vain to soothe her woes, redoubling my own distress by sympathizing with her sorrows. But the muddy torrent of grief, at length, by degrees, subsided; and the landscape of pleasure was again reflected in the mirror of joy.

Having smoothed our ruffled plumes, and expanded the wings of swiftness, we flew to a distant land, where we alighted in a paradisaical garden adjoining

ing to a royal mansion, gorgeous as the palaces of light on the rosy plains of evening. We afterwards found that the place was called Chanbalich, the imperial residence of the puissant emperor of Chathay 7.

Enchanted with the beauties of the place, in comparison of which the choicest flowers of poetic description appear like weeds in the garden of spring, we fixed on a mulberry tree for the construction of a second abode; and having compleated it with taste and elegance, we drank joy from the bursting grape, and eat sweetness from the rosy nectarine.

But alas! one morning as the chaste partner of my life was hopping about the nursery of seeds, she was caught by

the glossy neck in the treacherous snare
of the gardener.

Anxious at her unusual delay, I began
to beat the wings of enquiry, and found
her struggling, and even almost expir-
ing, in this indissoluble chain of capti-
vity.

A long time I endeavoured, with my
little bill, to untie the fatal noose, but
found it a fruitless labor; so perching
on a neighbouring tree, I bewailed my
captivated mate, wringing my soul with
sorrow.

I had not remained long in this cruel
situation, when I heard the brazen door
of the royal zennana^z opened towards
the garden; and lo! a company of
beautiful damsels issued forth, playing
heavenly strains upon a variety of instru-
ments of music.

^z The seraglio.

But

But in beauty, grace, and majesty,
 conspicuous above the rest, shone the
 royal virgin Gulzara^b, like Zohara^c,
 on the rosy fields of morn, when she
 rises with her sparkling attendants from
 bathing in the eastern deep.

No dew-drop glistening in the ray of
 the morning, could display half the
 brightness of her eyes; nor could all
 the softness of the rose of Damask com-
 pare with the fragrant blossoms of her
 cheeks. Her arched eye-brows were
 bows to kill, but her heart was tender,
 and her hands soft, to withdraw the
 weapon from the wound. From her
 red lips distilled balsamic sweets, and
 her panting breasts displayed a paradise
 of joy. The breezes from her ebon
 hair, stole precious essence to perfume

▪ The flower-garden.

• The morning star, or Venus.

the meads, where the beauteous nigris*, in sweet languor, reclines his head, turning, in expectation of her approach, its never-closing eyes. Nor do the meads rejoice alone in her presence, the sprightly lark, borne on the wings of pleasure, mistakes the opening of her eyes for the morning.

But words can no more paint her beauties, than the brightest colours in the treasury of nature can paint the meridian ray.

What insupportable pangs did I feel, when I perceived one of her attending nymphs running towards the companion of my distress, and seizing the screaming captive with the rude hand of violence; but her adorable mistress perceiving her, ran towards the place, and

* A kind of flower, probably the Narcissus.

Having checked the maid for the rudeness of her manner, stretched forth the delicate hand of compassion, and with all the tenderness of pity disengaged her from the cruel snare, stroking her glittering wings.

I felt some comfort at this gracious reception, but the loss of my lovely partner for ever recurred to my distracted mind ; determined at once rather to perish in company with my consort than to pine in the dark desert of solitude, I flapped the wings of love, and perched upon the alabaster hand of Gulzara, which held my captivated love.

Frightened at my intrusion she started back, but soon perceiving the cause, I beheld the transparent pearls trickling from the full roses of spring^d, while

^d Her cheeks.

the

the silver tongue of harmony pronounced these words of favor.

“Go, happy couple, go, enjoy your
 “constant loves ; go feast without fear
 “on the most delicious fruits of my
 “garden. Let me never be the cause
 “of grief, nor, like the proud tyrant
 “man, pervert the laws of nature. Ah!
 “why was I born a princess to be thus
 “immured in these cold walls where
 “love is denied access, and beauty per-
 “isheth like a flower in the desert ?”

So saying she released my companion, when we flew on the wings of ecstasy to our little nest, chattering expressions of gratitude. But we had not remained long in our joyful habitation, when we beheld the divine princess advancing towards the foot of the tree, where with one of her fair confidants she reclined on a mossy bank ; while

the other nymphs, by her command, retired to a respectful distance, whispering the breath of envy.

Bending the ear of attention, my mind soon mounted to the zenith of astonishment, at the curious conversation which ensued.

Here the parrot, ruffling up his plumes, made a short pause, on which the prince, whose curiosity was excited, desired him to proceed in his narration. But the lady, whose bosom, during the narrative, had often swelled with envy, while her cheeks glowed with shame, darting a scornful eye at the parrot, then leering upon the prince, thus addressed him :

“ Sacred repository of wisdom, permit not the vain tales of this lying
 “ prattler to find belief in the auditory
 “ of your mind; but as it seems to
 “ please

“ please the prince, he may amuse us
“ with his imaginary adventures, which
“ are divested of the shadow of truth.”

The prince checked her presumption with a frown, and the parrot, obedient to his command, unlocked the fountain of eloquence to call forth the flowers of imagination on the cultivated garden of the mind.

C H A P. IV.

The History of COMMLADEVE*.

TH E silver-robed daughter of beauty, with a smile benign as the evening ray, obliquely glancing through a shower in spring, thus questioned her lovely companion.

“ It must be so, my dear Commladeve; the peculiar dignity which I have always observed in your actions, assures me that you were not bred to

* This, in the Shanscrit language, means fair as the lotus or water-flower.

“ ser-

“ servility, nor inured to the chains of
 “ bondage : do therefore satisfy my cu-
 “ riosity in this point, permitting the
 “ seal of secrecy to be melted by the
 “ generous warmth of my friendship.”

Commladeve with a sigh, thus re-
 plied.—“ Fair queen of perfections, it
 “ were surely the height of ingratitude
 “ in the obsequious slave of your pre-
 “ sence, to keep any thing, under the
 “ veil of secrecy, concealed from your
 “ bountiful eyes. But you will be pleas-
 “ ed to remember, that not my own
 “ vanity, but your royal commands,
 “ obliged me to a recital of my adven-
 “ tures.”—— With that she wiped a
 bright tear that stood in the corner of
 her eye; and thus, with melodious
 voice, charmed the ear of attention.

“ If a long pearl-string of royal an-
 “ cestry should be deemed fortunate for

“ the possessor, few could with greater
 “ propriety be ostentatious of fortune’s
 “ favors than I ; but this is so far from
 “ contributing one drop to the measure
 “ of my happiness, that it has become a
 “ source of bitterness in the troubled
 “ fountain of my fate.

“ My progenitors, from time imme-
 “ morial, were rajas of the fertile king-
 “ dom of Chitor^f, which they ruled
 “ by the scepter of justice and the love
 “ of their subjects, more than by the
 “ sword of power. But at length the
 “ spear of Islamism^g pierced the peaceful
 “ shades of our retirement, so that our
 “ innocent plains streamed with blood,
 “ and gleamed with hostile arms.

^f One of the antient kingdoms of Hindostan,
 now a province of the Decan.

^g Mahomedans.

“ I was

“ I was then in my thirteenth year,
 “ and had, four years before, been be-
 “ trothed to Ammarsein, heir to the
 “ potent kingdom of Tilling^h, but had
 “ never seen him, but once, at the
 “ pompous celebration of our nuptials.
 “ After the destructive flames of war
 “ had for some time been blown from
 “ side to side before the contending
 “ gales of victory, notwithstanding our
 “ rajaputs^l did justice to loyalty and
 “ their native valor, yet, from the supe-
 “ rior skill and number of the enemy,
 “ the house of our prosperity was con-
 “ sumed, and my father, who had re-
 “ solved to perish with his country, was
 “ found wounded in the field, and car-
 “ ried prisoner in triumph to Delhi.

^h Now called Golconda, or Tillingana.

^l The fighting tribe of Hindoos.

“ As

“ I had previously been sent off with
 “ my mother to a small fortress situated
 “ upon a steep mountain, in the middle
 “ of an impervious wood. I escaped the
 “ rude hands of captivity ; but alas ! we
 “ had no prospect to soothe our eyes,
 “ except the smoaking ruins of our de-
 “ solated kingdom.

“ Unfortunate for my father as for
 “ me, the little beauty, wit, and other
 “ accomplishments, which I was then
 “ said to have possessed, were ex-
 “ agerated by the voice of fame. It
 “ reached, at length, the ears of the
 “ vizier ; he became desirous to gratify
 “ his passion, with the unblown rose of
 “ my virginity : he therefore began
 “ to solicit my father with fair pro-
 “ mises of liberty, restoration, and royal
 “ favor ; but he would not consent to
 “ grace the cabinet of prostituted love
 “ with

“ with this jewel of paternal affection.
 “ But at the same time unwilling to
 “ rouse the resentment of the vizier by
 “ a downright refusal, he endeavoured
 “ to temporize, by evasions, till other
 “ objects should engage his mind.

“ But at length the patience of the
 “ vizier was exhausted, and the insidi-
 “ ous fawning of the lion changed to
 “ menaces of rage. My unfortunate
 “ father was thrown into a dungeon,
 “ where his ears were only gratified by
 “ the music of his own chains, and his
 “ tongue only moistened by the tears
 “ of his aged eyes.

“ Here he conversed but with his
 “ own miseries, whilst death, his most
 “ wished-for companion was thrust back
 “ at the threshold of his abode. What
 “ could he do? The power of human
 “ fortitude was vanquished, and nature
 “ shrunk

“ shrunk at a constancy of woe. So
 “ having consented to write an order
 “ for my delivery, he was freed from
 “ the weight of his chains, and indulged
 “ with the extent of a garden, where a
 “ guard of Abyssinian slaves surrounded
 “ him, with a wall of iron.

“ The bearer of this order being
 “ bribed with a ring, carried at the
 “ same time a private letter to my mo-
 “ ther, informing her of the cruelty of
 “ his situation, and begging some me-
 “ thod might be contrived to convey
 “ him a relieving potion*, which was
 “ now the only possible hope of pre-
 “ serving the skirts of his honor un-
 “ stained, and the laws of his god invi-
 “ olated.

* Poison.

“ Unfor-

“ Unfortunately this letter, wrote with
 “ the gall of sorrow, conveyed that
 “ deadly poison to my dear mother,
 “ which my father had requested at her
 “ hand ; and, in the dreadful moment
 “ when life stood quivering at the cold
 “ door of the house of clay, she thrust
 “ the letter into my hand, and, with a
 “ smile, to encourage the example, re-
 “ signed her soul to heaven.

“ The current of my blood ran back,
 “ the face of my condition was darken-
 “ ed, and the owl of affliction began to
 “ scream in the hollow of my ears. But
 “ I soon recovered from this transitory
 “ death, and a glimpse of reviving hope
 “ shot through the dark dungeon of
 “ my despair.

“ I immediately gave orders for my
 “ retinue to be prepared, in compliance
 “ with my father’s command ; but, in-
 “ stead

“stead of my maids of honor, I gave
 “private instructions that twenty of the
 “bravest warriors of the court should
 “be cloathed in complete armour, to
 “attend me in covered doolys¹ to the
 “imperial court of Delhi.

“The joyful vizier being informed
 “of my approach by a messenger, by
 “whom I requested the favor of first
 “paying a visit to my father, it was
 “granted me without hesitation. Ac-
 “cordingly, when the doolys were car-
 “ried within my father’s apartments, and
 “all the bearers and servants had retir-
 “ed, I threw myself at his feet, and
 “clasping his trembling knees, inform-
 “ed him of the desperate scheme I had
 “undertaken for his deliverance.

¹ Covered chairs, in which women are carried
 on mens shoulders.

“There

“ There was no time for hesitation,
 “ he embraced me tenderly, and seiz-
 “ ing a sword and shield, which I had
 “ prepared for him, while I waved ano-
 “ ther sabre in my own hand, he com-
 “ manded me to follow under the sha-
 “ dow of his protection.

“ So placing himself at the head of
 “ his brave warriors, he fell upon the
 “ guards in the passage, carrying death
 “ before him to the gate, where we
 “ mounted the Arabian courfers of my
 “ retinue, so that by favor of the night
 “ and the crowd we escaped the pre-
 “ cincts of the city, and were far ad-
 “ vanced on our journey before day.

“ Now the vizier, like a hungry
 “ panther when robbed by the tiger of
 “ his prey, gnashed the sharp teeth of
 “ resentment, and, having dispatched
 “ a party of horse in pursuit, we ob-
 “ served

“ served them in a cloud of dust, the
 “ very moment we had alighted in a
 “ grove, to unbrace the strained si-
 “ news of toil.

“ I was immediately remounted, and
 “ commanded with one trusty servant
 “ to fly ; and, however desirous I was
 “ to abide the event, my father was
 “ not to be disobeyed.

“ I soon perceived the bloody work
 “ of death commenced between unequal
 “ numbers, and looking forward be-
 “ held another body of cavalry on full
 “ gallop on the road toward me. I
 “ concluded myself now in the jaws of
 “ inevitable ruin, so drawing a poig-
 “ nard, I raised the hand of resolution
 “ against my own existence; when I
 “ heard a well-known voice crying,
 “ Stop! stop! your rash hand, illustri-
 “ ous prince, and in us behold your
 “ loyal servants ! “ I

“ I immediately perceived him to be
 “ the faithful dewan^m of my father, in
 “ company with my young lord Am-
 “ marsein, who being informed of my
 “ bold undertaking, had advanced to
 “ secure our retreat.

“ The joyful prince threw himself
 “ on the ground to salute me; but
 “ beckoning, I exclaimed; my father!
 “ my father! my father! He appre-
 “ hended my meaning, bounded into
 “ his saddle; commanded three horse-
 “ men to attend me, and with the rest
 “ of his troop, on fiery hoof, flew to
 “ the scene of action; where I was af-
 “ terwards informed my father, with
 “ five of wounded friends, remaining
 “ of his train, like wood-men in the
 “ meridian hour, scarce raised the arms

^m Steward.

“ of languor. But this seasonable relief
 “ soon veiled the face of danger ; for
 “ the prince, like a young lion in his
 “ first attempt, exulted in his might,
 “ and strewed the field with slaughter.

“ While my heart burnt on the em-
 “ bers of anxiety, I observed six horse-
 “ men advancing on the wings of
 “ speed. I fluttered with expectation,
 “ like a lark when the dawn proclaims
 “ the glad tidings of the morning.

“ But alas ! what was my disappoint-
 “ ment and terror, when my attendants
 “ were smote with the sword, my wea-
 “ pons wrested from my hands ? I
 “ remember no more ; for I was car-
 “ ried off insensible of existence, and
 “ on my recovery found myself lying
 “ in a covered pallangky, travelling I
 “ knew not whither, and guarded by a
 “ company of horsemen.

“ Now

“ Now all the horrors of my fate
 “ crowded at once upon my mind. I
 “ conceived myself in the hands of a
 “ cruel enemy, whom I considered as
 “ the murtherer of my father, of my
 “ mother, of my husband, of my friends,
 “ and the intended murtherer of my
 “ own virtue.

“ I was, in short, carried to Delhi,
 “ dragged into a magnificent zennana,
 “ and by the abominable hands of
 “ eunuchs, laid upon a bed of state.

“ I had not long remained here to
 “ ruminate on my miseries, when I be-
 “ held an old tottering wretch enter
 “ the apartment, with a long black
 “ beard dyed with antimony, a staff in
 “ his withered hand, and his hollow
 “ eyes like candles in the socket, ex-
 “ piring in the last flames of desire;
 “ he advanced, and thus addressed me :

“ Let thy griefs be dispelled, O fair
 “ light of my eyes! I come to worship
 “ the rising sun of thy beauties, and
 “ enfold thee in the arms or love.”

“ Art thou that monster, said I, who,
 “ dead to humanity as to pleasure,
 “ riseth, like a ghost from the grave,
 “ to devour the flesh of the living, and
 “ suck blood from the veins of the inno-
 “ cent? Go, spectre! go, direct thy
 “ adoration to heaven, and infold with
 “ those withered arms the altar of thy
 “ offended God.

“ Wounded by the dart of reproach,
 “ for a moment, he hesitated between
 “ patience and anger; but, at length,
 “ his meagre jaws grinned a horrid
 “ smile, and he staggered forward to
 “ embrace me; when, with all the
 “ force of horror and resentment, I
 “ threw him at full length on the floor.

“ He

“ He arose uttering exclamations of
 “ rage, and with a fierce countenance
 “ retiring, told me, that since my folly
 “ had rejected his lenity, it must expe-
 “ rience the effects of his power.

“ As he left me no time for reply, I
 “ threw myself down on the bed of af-
 “ fliction, fluttering like a bird in the
 “ snare, dreading the hands of the
 “ fowler ; but my attention was soon
 “ drawn from my condition, by the
 “ appearance of an antiquated daughter
 “ of Time, whose breasts hung withered
 “ and low, and whose flaming eyes were
 “ like festering wounds. Her long
 “ prominent nose, seemed a hook to
 “ suspend her lower jaw, and a crooked
 “ gash between, devouring her own
 “ lips, extended from ear to ear.

“ Bent, like a beggar on crutches,
 “ she limped towards me; and, with
 E 3 “ the

“ the squeaking voice of a squirrel, thus
 “ presented her deceitful address.

“ Fair princess, whose beauties
 “ brighten my aged eyes, and recal
 “ the past joys of my youth, let me
 “ approach the eyes of discernment
 “ with the jewels of wisdom, and drop
 “ into the ear of attention the salutary
 “ balm of advice.

“ How much is your fortune to be
 “ envied, sweet princess, who, as yet,
 “ in the morning of life, hast risen,
 “ with superior lustre, to the zenith of
 “ terrestrial bliss! What do I say? here
 “ paradise itself smiles around. Here
 “ love has taken up his abode. Here
 “ the treasures of Karoon^a are accumu-
 “ lated for you: variety to please the

^a A person, who according to the Mahom-
 medans, was possessed of immense wealth.

“ fight;

" fight ; music to charm the ear ; and a
 " thousand maidens, cloathed in gold,
 " obsequious to the turn of your eye.
 " What more is to be enjoyed, or what
 " more is to be desired ? Let there-
 " fore the curtain of virgin modesty be
 " withdrawn, and the light of pleasure
 " shine freely into the perfumed apart-
 " ment of love."

" Thus the vile forceress continued
 " her strain of temptation, till rage fer-
 " menting in my bosom, burst forth in
 " a torrent of abuse. When the hag
 " perceived her wheedling arts were vain,
 " she tottered out muttering revenge,
 " and presently returned with a band
 " of base eunuchs, who seized me by
 " her command, bound me up to one
 " of the pillars, and began to raise
 " their whips over me, and threaten
 " me with the terror of the scourge ;

“ but my spirits being expended in the
 “ struggle, my eyes were overshadow-
 “ ed with darkness, the current of my
 “ blood stood still, and for some time
 “ I remained without motion, the pale
 “ companion of the dead.

“ When I recovered from this state
 “ of mortality, I found myself unbound
 “ on a couch, surrounded by a number
 “ of beautiful females, pressing my
 “ limbs with their tender hands, and
 “ others besprinkling my face with
 “ water made of artificial snow, while
 “ the mother of prostitution was sitting
 “ squat on the carpet, like the trunk
 “ of an aged tree.

“ When she perceived me recover,
 “ she withdrew, telling me she hoped
 “ her next visit would find me more
 “ sensible of my own folly, and thank-
 “ ful for her intended favors.

“ I now

“ I now addressed myself to the ladies
 “ around, acknowledged their huma-
 “ nity, at the same time informing them
 “ that their care for my recovery had
 “ to me proved the greatest misfortune,
 “ for that death was the only friend
 “ from whom I now hoped relief, and
 “ that a grave was the only bed upon
 “ which I wished to repose.

“ I perceived this declaration drew
 “ sympathizing tears into the bright
 “ eyes of one of this fair assembly,
 “ which prepossessed me so much in
 “ her favor, that I courteously re-
 “ quested the others would retire, and
 “ leave me to recover my fatigue, giv-
 “ ing, at the same time, a private hint
 “ to the lady who I intended should re-
 “ main.

“ When they had all taken leave, I
 “ took hold of this favorite lady’s hand,
 “ when

“ when I perceived I had lost a ruby of
 “ inestimable value, from the ring-
 “ finger of my own, which gave me
 “ some concern, as it had been the nup-
 “ tial gift of my lord Ammarsein ; but
 “ I took no further notice at that time
 “ of this least of my misfortunes.

“ When I had seated the lady by me,
 “ I told her I was well assured, that the
 “ breast which possessed so much hu-
 “ manity, harboured no guile : that
 “ therefore I had chosen her for the re-
 “ pository of my confidence, and the
 “ companion of my distress. She re-
 “ turned me thanks for my favorable
 “ opinion, which she hoped, by her be-
 “ haviour to deserve ; and assured me
 “ whatever I had to communicate,
 “ should remain under the seal of se-
 “ crecy, locked up in the treasury of
 “ her heart.

“ Without

“ Without further ceremony, I be-
 “ gan to unfold the black book of my
 “ destiny, which we blotted together
 “ with our tears ; and, when I had
 “ finished the mournful tale, she hastily
 “ arose, and desired me to compose my-
 “ self a little ; then embracing me ten-
 “ derly, told me she was going, at the
 “ risque of her life, to effect my imme-
 “ diate deliverance. With this she in-
 “ stantly ran out of the room.

“ I was somewhat astonished at this
 “ abrupt behaviour, but soon found
 “ that my friend was true to her word.
 “ Being intimate with Mherpirwir, the
 “ favorite mistress of the illustrious
 “ prince Jehandar, she hastened to pay
 “ her a visit, and, relating the particu-
 “ lars of my story, it was communi-
 “ cated to the sultan.”

The

The prince here interrupting the parrot, told him he remembered the whole, but was impatient to know by what means she had travelled to the court of Cathay. The parrot resumed his narrative, but first begged that the lady, who now began to discover strong emotions of anxiety, might retire.

The lady, unable to suppress her passion, flew like a fury to the bird, and would have instantly deprived him of his head, had not the prince seized her hands, and commanded her, instantly, to leave the room: she obeyed in a flood of tears, to the no small astonishment of the sultan. The poor parrot recovering from his fright, proceeded thus:

“The generous prince,” continued the fair Commladeve, “was no sooner
“informed

“ informed of those deeds of darkness,
 “ than he commanded the attendance
 “ of the vizier; and having pierced his
 “ heart with the lances of reproach,
 “ told him his life must now answer
 “ for an immediate delivery of the cap-
 “ tive maid.

“ The vizier having exhausted all his
 “ long practised arts of flattery and de-
 “ ceit, finding the prince unshaken in
 “ his purpose, trembled for the im-
 “ pending blow, and was constrained
 “ to give orders for my delivery.

“ Accordingly the chojaferai ° was
 “ dispatched with a guard and a close
 “ litter, with orders to convey me to
 “ the prince’s zennana †, whose respect

° Master of the household ; generally the chief eunuch.

† Womens apartment, or seraglio.

“ and

“ and complaisance permitted him not
 “ to alarm me with the light foot of
 “ curiosity.

“ Here I found my faithful friend;
 “ who durst not return to her habita-
 “ tion: she introduced me to the court-
 “ ly Mherpirwir, by whom I was en-
 “ gaged to a repetition of all she had
 “ heard before, and, having supped
 “ together on the most exquisite rari-
 “ ties of the season, I was conducted
 “ into a magnificent apartment to feast
 “ on the sweets of repose.

“ Here sleep, the twin brother of
 “ death, in spite of fear, distress, and
 “ anxiety, visited my aching eyes; and
 “ next morning, when the king of stars
 “ pierced through the casements of my
 “ solitude, I found myself, like the
 “ traveller of the desert, who had, ac-
 “ cidentally,

“ cidentally, met with a fountain to
“ quench his burning thirst.

“ A number of female slaves imme-
“ diately attended to attire me ; and in
“ a few hours, I was conducted by the
“ chief eunuch, to the anti-chamber
“ of the great durbar¹, where he direct-
“ ed me to a rent in the purdo², to be a
“ witness of what passed in the hall.
“ Here I beheld the young sultan seat-
“ ed in majesty on a gorgeous throne,
“ which was exquisitely formed in the
“ shape of an expanded peacock, fea-
“ thered with precious jewels, bright as
“ the variegated bow, with the golden-
“ mooned train, like a canopy of fire
“ projecting over his sacred head : a
“ gilded book in his left hand, and a

¹ The audience chamber.

² A curtain or skreen.

“ studded

“ studded scepter in his right: while a
 “ thousand omrahs, in glittering bro-
 “ cade, with their hands joined obse-
 “ quiously before, formed an exten-
 “ sive avenue according to their rank,
 “ from the foot of his awful tribunal.

“ Here she was interrupted by the
 “ adorable Gulzara, who requested a
 “ particular description of your majes-
 “ ty’s person; which, with the boldest
 “ strokes of the pencil of rhetoric, she
 “ attempted; and, to all appearance,
 “ raised such emotions in her panting
 “ breast, as might prove unfavourable
 “ to her future repose. When the fair
 “ Commladeve had endeavoured to
 “ gratify her curiosity on this head, she
 “ thus proceeded on the flowery paths
 “ of narration.

“ I now beheld the vizier conducted
 “ by chobdars*, towards the throne,

* Mace-bearers.

“ bowing

“ bowing his face three times to the
 “ ground, while they proclaimed health
 “ to the king of the world!——When
 “ his accusation was read aloud, he
 “ humbled his furrowed forehead to
 “ the dust; and, uncovering his bald
 “ head, made a confession of his guilt
 “ in tears, but begged, that in conside-
 “ ration of his past services, he might
 “ be permitted to grasp the skirts of
 “ mercy, and that the expiring flame of
 “ his life might be left to the extinguish-
 “ ing hand of nature. To which the
 “ prince made this reply: though mer-
 “ cy is the attribute of heaven itself,
 “ yet we give birth to a thousand crimes
 “ by forgiving one. Thus, at last, the
 “ weed of wickedness becomes so luxu-
 “ riant in the soil of life, that the hand
 “ of toil is never able to root it out.

“ When I heard these words, I
 “ trembled for the irrevocable decree,
 “ and, compassionating the unfortunate
 “ wretch, begged the choja would
 “ make intercession for his life in my
 “ behalf, and acquaint the prince, that
 “ hearing my father and husband were
 “ still alive, I had nothing to demand
 “ of the vizier but a ruby ring which I
 “ held in particular estimation, and
 “ which was stolen from my finger, as I
 “ imagined, by some of the eunuchs of
 “ his zennana.

“ The prince, though with seeming
 “ reluctance, remitted the severity of
 “ his intentions, but threw him from
 “ the height of office, with these re-
 “ markable words :

“ When the pillars of the state are
 “ rotten, the fabric must fall to the
 “ ground ; we therefore lighten thy
 “ weak

“ weak shoulders of the weight of go-
 “ vernment, and permit thee to walk
 “ to the grave in peace, and let God
 “ be the judge of thy sins.

“ He then commanded the ring to
 “ be restored ; for which purpose all
 “ the eunuchs who were present, were
 “ called, and strictly questioned con-
 “ cerning the theft, but they stood ob-
 “ stinately to their innocence, and infi-
 “ nuated, that as the old woman was
 “ present, she ought equally with them
 “ to be suspected of that crime.

“ The old forceress was accordingly
 “ sent for, but vehemently denied the
 “ charge ; upon which the vizier and
 “ omrahs proposed the torture to draw
 “ confession from the accused, but the
 “ prince objected to this method, say-
 “ ing ;

“ There is nothing concealed from
 “ the eyes of those whom God hath
 “ chosen to be the judges of his people,
 “ why therefore should the innocent
 “ suffer for the guilty, and his ministers
 “ be charged with injustice? Let there-
 “ fore the accused be carried into sepa-
 “ rate apartments, till we have consult-
 “ ed the Genius of Truth.

“ As soon as they were carried off,
 “ the prince ordered a small quantity
 “ of hing* to be brought, and having
 “ rubbed it on the cover of the book
 “ which he held in his hand, he desired
 “ it might be placed on a table in the
 “ the adjoining chamber. He then or-
 “ dered back the prisoners, one by one,
 “ and commanded them to walk alone
 “ into the chamber, and there, with-

* A kind of drug.

“ their

“ their right hand on the book, to
 “ swear to their innocence before God ;
 “ when, if they were guilty of the fact,
 “ the power of their arm would inevita-
 “ bly be taken away ; but if guiltless,
 “ they should receive no hurt.

“ At this I observed some of the
 “ courtiers turning the sneer of con-
 “ tempt, while others, with open
 “ mouths, devoured the air of astonish-
 “ ment ; and I must confess, I myself
 “ had no favorable opinion of this un-
 “ common manner of trial. But when
 “ I saw the first eunuch returning, and
 “ heard the prince commanding one of
 “ the omrahs to examine whether his
 “ hand was tainted with the smell, I
 “ began to see through this artifice, and
 “ admired the sagacity of the scheme.
 “ In short, all the eunuchs upon exa-
 “ mination, were discharged, but when

“ the old woman came to the trial, her
 “ conscience accused her of guilt ; and,
 “ fearing the wrath of heaven, she re-
 “ turned without touching the book ;
 “ for upon the strictest examination, her
 “ hand was found perfectly untainted
 “ with the odor.

“ She immediately confessed her
 “ crime, and implored forgiveness, but
 “ she was decreed to be scourged out of
 “ the city, while the whole court re-
 “ sounded with acclamations of praise
 “ of the prince’s wisdom.

“ Thus I recovered my ring, and re-
 “ tired greatly delighted with the ful-
 “ tan’s behaviour, which my heart, un-
 “ experienced in guile, soon disclosed
 “ to the piercing eye of Mherpirwir.
 “ She flamed with jealous rage, till she
 “ found means to effect my destruc-
 “ tion.

“ How-

“ However fair the externals of my
 “ present condition now appeared, no-
 “ thing could in fact be more delusive.
 “ It was not sufficient [to be conscious
 “ that the veil of my chastity was as
 “ snow, since the rigorous tenets of our
 “ religion rendered me polluted in the
 “ eyes of my family and friends, and an
 “ abomination to the arms of my hus-
 “ band *. What could I do? My
 “ heart in spite of reason and honor re-
 “ belled against my own repose, and a
 “ delirious imagination presented me,
 “ night and day, with the enchanting
 “ idea of the illustrious sultan, in-
 “ much that I thought of liberty no
 “ more, and trembled for the hour of
 “ my departure.

* By the Hindoo religion, all persons who
 associate with another sect, in any manner what-
 ever, are polluted and excommunicated.

“ I was now informed that the gene-
 “ rous prince had reinstated my father
 “ in his dominions, and had ordered a
 “ magnificent retinue, with honor, to
 “ attend me to his court. The news
 “ was like thunder to my ear, and,
 “ tossed by a whirlwind of passion, I ran
 “ to the chojaferay, conjuring him to
 “ inform the prince, that as I was
 “ now excommunicated from the so-
 “ ciety of my friends for ever, I re-
 “ quested permission to remain under
 “ the royal shade of his bounty, and
 “ pass the future days of my life in some
 “ solitary corner of obscurity.

“ The prince was astonished at my
 “ request, but immediately gave orders
 “ for an appointment of slaves, and all
 “ other necessaries suitable to the dig-
 “ nity of my birth. This having reach-
 “ ed the ears of Mherpirwir, she was
 “ stung

“ stung by the scorpion of jealousy
 “ more and more, till she quickly ac-
 “ complished my ruin. That very night
 “ I was seized by a band of ruffians, in
 “ disguise, and carried by a Mogul
 “ merchant to the court of Chathay,
 “ through a variety of dangers and dis-
 “ tresses, and sold as a slave to the in-
 “ comparable Gulzara.”

Here the prince arose, striding thrice
 across the apartment with hasty step,
 while the lightening of a storm of rage
 darted from under his cloudy brow;
 but sitting down, he commanded his
 attention while the parrot continued his
 tale.

The adorable Gulzara, here wiping
 the sweet tear of compassion, like the be-
 nign dew of heaven which stands glis-
 tening in the morning ray, with a voice
 that could charm to innocence the ser-
 pent

pent in the hand of danger, thus her lovely companion addressed :

“ O Commladeve ! why do you af-
 “ flict my ear with that odious word
 “ *slave* ? You must be sensible, my
 “ friend, that I never considered you in
 “ that light. Are we not all free by
 “ nature ; and surely accursed are they
 “ who inhumanly impose chains of
 “ bondage on their fellow creatures ?
 “ O Commladeve, methinks I could
 “ love the prince, but Gulzara would
 “ die before she could betray you.
 “ What a wretch must that lady be, who
 “ could thus make so light a sacrifice of
 “ innocence ! Surely were such a mag-
 “ nanimous prince acquainted with the
 “ baseness of her mind, an assemblage
 “ of all the beauties of our sex could
 “ not draw him within the circle of her
 “ charms. Were I disposed to the in-
 “ fection

“fection of envy, my heart would sick-
 “en at her happiness in his love. But
 “why should we envy the happiness of
 “others, when it only diminishes our
 “own!

“You must have heard that my
 “royal father, Alta Chan, has destined
 “me, at a proper age, to the arms of
 “Tuli Chan, fourth son of the most
 “puissant monarch Chingez Chan”,
 “the conqueror of the world; who,
 “from being a captain in the service of
 “Onick Chan, king of Mogulistan,
 “shaded with his victorious standards
 “the crimsoned face of the extended
 “earth, and reduced the power of a
 “thousand kings within the grasp of
 “his potent hand.

“ Zengis Chan, the Great:

“ But

“ But the young lion Tuli Chan,
 “ like his father, delighteth in nothing
 “ but in rapine and blood. Bred up
 “ in the fields of slaughter, his soul is
 “ shut up to humanity; he places his
 “ boast in depopulating kingdoms, and
 “ glories in his own might; with him
 “ love is but the lust of a savage,
 “ and beauty but the play-thing of an
 “ hour. What happiness can I expect
 “ with such a man? Ah, were he the
 “ magnanimous Jehandar !”

“ So saying, she arose erect, while her
 “ jet-black hair rolled behind, like the
 “ deep stream round the marble rock,
 “ as it falls from the hills of Sewalic.
 “ Then, seizing the arm of Commla-
 “ deve, they walked into the zennana,
 “ like the daughters of light *, when

* The Houries, or the women promised by
 Mahommed to his followers in Paradise.

“ they

“they retire into the gilded apartments
“of Paradise.”

Fired with the description of this fair idol of perfection, and the idea of rivalling so great a prince, the sultan gave the reins of reason into the hand of imagination, and ran headlong into the wilderness of love.

Like Mudgeno* he frequented the silent shades, talked with the trees, and reasoned with the floods, sat lonely with sorrow, and passed the night in tears. Insnared like a bird in Gulzara's flowing hair, he incessantly besought heaven to end his wretched existence, or permit the united streams of their life to flow through the regions of joy. Let not the manner of his love surprise us ;

* Famed in a fine poem for his love for Leilli.

love assaults the ears as well as he assails the eyes; for the image of beautiful objects in description, pass over polished minds, fair as the reality over polished glass; the only difference is, that the last retains no impression, but the first on the table of memory leaves the object deeply engraved.

The prince now neglected to hear the sequel of the parrot's adventures; but some days after, he commanded him to repeat the whole, and asked him a thousand questions concerning the fair bride of his imagination. This only inflamed him the more, when the parrot thus concluded his tale to the ruin of the conceited Mherpirwir.

In this peaceful habitation, with my beloved mate, I enjoyed for some time a life of uninterrupted pleasure,
 2 and

and we were often fed by the fair hand of this guardian angel of Eden. At length misfortune found out our retreat in a cat's rapacious form, when my mate was devoured in protecting her helpless young, and they too perished in the same unrelenting claws, which left your slave to sorrow.

The scene of my former joys became odious to my eyes, and I wandered on the wings of distraction, till one day, gnawed by the worm of hunger, I alighted on a fig-tree, in a garden, when I found myself entangled in a net²; there was I caught by the boy you beheld, and had the happiness soon after of recognizing my ge-

² Nets used to preserve fruit from the birds, and save it in its fall.

herous prince, and of reciting my little adventures.

Now in your bosom I seek protection from the rage of that bubble of pride, who, with a handful of beauty, would exalt herself as the criterion of perfections, and the fairest of the daughters of men. Does she think the fertility of the fancy of nature could be expended in one poor piece? or all the beauties of the garden of creation comprehended in a single flower?

Under this extensive star-built arch of heaven, how many noble exhibitions of the divine hand, strokes of transcendant beauty, and beings that each other excel in the infinite scale of perfection; and were this gilded insect of vanity to unfold her wings
in

in the presence of the divine Gulzara,
her spark would be lost in the blaze,
like the fire-fly in the ray of the
morning.

C H A P. V.

THUS Jehandar Shaw permitted the cuckunufs* of love to build her inflammable nest in the cleft of his broken heart. But to gain further assurance of the real existence of this fair object of his desires, he commanded the attendance of a most eminent painter, whose name was Benezire. His eye was the compass of proportion; his fancy the mirror of nature; and his pencil the finger of spring. His touch was like the rod of enchantment, which, in living perspective on the wing of a beetle, could unfold a new creation to the eyes.

* Perhaps the phoenix.

Had the far-famed Mani of Chin^e, now lived to have beheld the productions of this unparalleled pen, the favor of embellishing his entoyrements would have been deemed by him a noble school of improvement.

Here art and nature joined their powers; for which art gave body and color, nature seemed to inspire his pictures with life: here the sight so deceived our judgment, that we never doubted of the reality, nor thought of satisfying the touch, excepting when some fair maid was pourtrayed in all her wanton smiles, which tempted us to the false embrace. Or when some luscious fruits were painted bending the tender boughs, and then, when we stretched forth our hand, we started at the hovering bee.

▷ A famous painter of China.

This great master of his art, the prince commanded to be dressed in the apparel of a merchant, and ransacked the hidden treasures of a dynasty of kings, to furnish him with rich merchandize. With these he ordered him to travel to the happy region, dignified by the abode of that unconscious robber of hearts; and there endeavour, by the power of his art, to steal a resemblance of that envy of the Pirries.

Benezire, in obedience to the will of his prince, bound up the necessities of his intention on the hardy bred sons of the desert^d; and with a long string of ostrich-necked camels, began to wind, by slow degrees, the line of his tedious journey.

After sustaining much toil, and surmounting much danger, he at length

^d Camels.

arrived

arrived safe at the golden city of Chan-balich *, the magnificent capital of the rich and potent kingdom of Cathay, situated upon the banks of an inhabited river, by the foot of the gorgeous throne of Alta Chan †, fugfar of Chin, and father to the divine Gulzara.

Here, at the gate of the royal palace, he unbound the packs of inestimable treasure, and, selecting a few of his most ordinary trinkets, distributed them, according to custom, among the servants of the imperial court; yet so great was even the value of these, in proportion to the presents of other merchants, that they procured him a speedy admission into the shadow of the ministers of the illustrious presence, where he obtained the honor of dis-

* Probably Pekin.

† Emperor.

playing his inestimable merchandize before the eyes of the astonished court.

The king, vouchsafing to look upon him, enquired of the approaching to the throne, from what country that merchant had travelled, which could produce such rich traders, and supply him with such valuable and curious commodities.

Benezire, from the fertility of his invention, gave satisfactory answers to these demands; and the king having pitched upon some of his goods, left the price to his own valuation; then dismissing him, gave particular orders to treat him with justice and hospitality, while in the protected circle of his royal dominions.

As Benezire was returning to his lodgings, he heard the sound of his own fame in every street, and soon
found

found it had reached the impearled ears of Gulzara, who had signified her sublime will to command his immediate attendance. But the crafty painter, knowing that delay was the true ferment of female curiosity, excused himself by pretended sickness, from accepting the unmerited honor tendered by her royal favor.

The next morning a second order arrived; but he counterfeited sickness so well, that the messenger was effectually deceived, and returned with this answer, and petition:

“ Bright queen of the world, the
 “ goods which the house of their * ser-
 “ vant’s poverty containeth, are only
 “ adapted for the meanest of the slaves

* It is common in the east, to address princes in the third person plural.

“ of their royalty, from whom only he
 “ expected the slightest attention. But
 “ as it hath pleased their high will to
 “ command his attendance, he is sorry
 “ that sickness has hitherto prevented
 “ him from the honor of such unmerit-
 “ ed favor; but if they will condescend
 “ to inspect his commodities to-morrow,
 “ within the gate of the palace-garden,
 “ he will wait their royal commands,
 “ and be brightened by the beams of
 “ their presence.”

The curiosity of the princess having
 now mounted the zenith, she immedi-
 ately consented to his petition. As
 soon as the world-warming sun had ex-
 alted his luminous head over the bright
 shoulder of the topaz morning, high in
 a golden amari¹, on the back of a tow-

¹ Called also a howdar, or elephant castle.

ering state elephant, caparisoned in embroidered purple, with trappings of massy gold, issued forth, like the moon on the heavenly pavement, attended by a thousand stars that graced her splendid train, Gulzara in radiance that eclipsed the day !

The delicate smilers of the season^{*} faded at her approach, and conscious of inferior charms dissolved in envious tears.

Here seated, like a goddess, in Fortune's adamantine throne, attired in golden robes, she commanded the merchant to attend, who hastened to her joyful presence, thrice bending the forehead of obedience to the dust of humility, then opened his rich merchandize to her auspicious view.

^{*} The flowers.

But

But as soon as she approached towards him, she drew over her veil, thin as the filmy web on the dew-bathed lilies of the morning. She commanded her attending matrons, who had devoured the blossoms of many years, to bring his various curiosities for her inspection.

Now the crafty Benezire begun with the worst of his commodities. By degrees he produced better and better, till such muslins of inconceivable fineness, stuffs of such richness and taste, trinkets of such exquisite workmanship, and jewels of such inestimable worth, were revealed, as had never before been exhibited at one time, from the secret treasury of nature, or the public store-house of art.

Her choice was distracted by variety, and at last she made choice of the whole, expressing

expressing her surprize in such beautiful exclamations, as the tongue of explanation, like a pretender to music, must be ridiculed in attempting to command.

When they were carrying them off into the zennana, one of her fair worshippers¹, kissing the dust of obeisance, told her, that the merchant had still a small casket unopened, which he was endeavouring with all his art to conceal; that it was studded with precious jewels, and carefully wrapt up in a cloth of embroidered crimson.

Imagining there must undoubtedly be something extraordinary in this box, she commanded him to open it, to which the merchant pretended the greatest unwillingness; but the greater

¹ Maids.

difficulty he made, the more her curiosity was excited ; till no longer able to resist her importunity, in manner wholly obsequious, he thus addressed her :

“ O serene beam of the firmament,
 “ you have condescended to bestow
 “ praises on the things you have seen,
 “ yet the only thing in which I can
 “ glory as the possessor, is contained in
 “ this precious box. But as it is the
 “ inestimable property of a great prince,
 “ it is impossible for me to unlock it,
 “ without the key of his supreme pleasure.”

On hearing these words, the flame of curiosity gained ascendance. The sharp thorns of her threats were mixed with the sweet flowers of persuasion, when Benezire thus signified his assent :

“ Fair

“ Fair pattern of excellence, it is
 “ known to your enlightened mind that
 “ a breach of the ties of confidence,
 “ hastens to the pit of dishonour,
 “ exposes the heart to the vulture of
 “ conscience, and the face to the darts
 “ of reproach. But since the resistless
 “ commands of a princess, the asylum
 “ of the world, are laid upon me, it must
 “ plead to the world my excuse. Yet
 “ have I promised, I have even sworn,
 “ that this box should not depart from
 “ my own hand, therefore let your slave
 “ be indulged, most gracious princess,
 “ with the honor of presenting it himself
 “ to your bright eyes, endued with so
 “ many virtues.”

When the princess perceived his ob-
 stinacy, and that to all appearance the
 plough of time had furrowed his aged
 brow, she commanded him to advance

*
 —

with

with the box, and, with the coral fingers of morning, drew the veil from the face of brightness that darted chosen rays

Benezire, like a sparkling atom aspiring to the radiant sun, was lost in the dazzling blaze, and stood for some time like the picture of astonishment, staring without speech or motion; when unfortunately the precious box fell from his trembling hand.

Gulzara, somewhat alarmed at his uncommon perturbation, questioned him thus: "What is the matter, Sir? who are you, and from whence, that dare in my presence be so forgetful of yourself?"

Benezire recollecting himself as well as he could, replied:

"O brightest star of the firmament
"of empire, excuse the imbecility
"of

“ of old age. The storms of many
 “ years, that have shaken this tottering
 “ frame, subject me to these unfortu-
 “ nate tremors.” Then taking up
 the box, it flew open by a spring to
 the touch. The first object that pre-
 sented itself to her view, was a living
 picture of Jehandar Shaw, which he
 had drawn with the pencil of excel-
 lence.

The princess blushed at the unexpect-
 ed encounter, turning her eyes aside,
 but reviewing it attentively, with appa-
 rent satisfaction, she took it up in her
 lovely hand, and, having minutely ex-
 amined it, turned to the merchant,
 and enquired whose box it was that
 was so full of the incense of delight?

“ The box is the property of your
 “ slave,” replied Benezire — “ But
 “ the

“ the picture,” interrupted the princess,
 “ whose picture is this ?”

“ The picture,” continued Benezire,
 “ is a faint resemblance of Jehandar
 “ Shaw, prince of the mighty empire
 “ of Hindostan, whose beauty excels
 “ the beauties of Joseph ^m, and whose
 “ valor exceeds the valor of the heroic
 “ Rustum ⁿ, as much as the figure of
 “ juvenility the decayed powers of de-
 “ crepid old age. His princely gene-
 “ rosity makes that of the far-famed
 “ Hatim of Tai be forgotten ; the
 “ music of his eloquent tongue is a
 “ charm to the ear of affliction ; and
 “ the birds of the free air, by his hu-

^m Joseph the son of Jacob, is thought by the
 Mahommedans to have been the handsomest of
 men.

ⁿ A famous hero of Seistan.

“ manity

“manity, are invited to perch on his
“right hand.

“Why then should I relate among
“the least of his accomplishments, that
“when mounted upon his fire-breath-
“ing courser, that is bold like the pan-
“ther, the hungry lion skulks, tremb-
“ling among the foxes, and the huge
“elephant, in the maddening season of
“desire, flies roaring into the caverns
“of obscurity?

“When his wit darts like lightning,
“the thunder of applause rolls around,
“and his judgment is a pole-star of
“direction to the world: when his love
“is once kindled, it is like the fire of
“the magi, never more to be extin-
“guished. When he moves to war,
“the trembling nations mark, with
“astonishment, his rapid progress, like
“the path of a comet through a stormy

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“sky:

“ sky : but when his brow commands
 “ the storms to silence, his soul is serene and placid as the deep, after the
 “ winds are laid.”

The princess, before prejudiced in favor of this character, and seeing the picture, bore testimony of the truth, permitted the seeds of affection to take root in the garden of her heart ; and alas ! too soon the bitter plant began to rear its prickly head, cherished by the ray of luxurious pleasure, pouring on a fertile soil. But virgin-modesty had seized upon the skirts of utterance, and the impropriety of the time obliged her to silence ; yet loath, very loath, to lose all view of the object of her wishes, she demanded the price of the picture.

Benezire, turning his face to the ground expressive of the utmost anxiety, ~~thus~~ exclaimed : “ Unhappy man, that
 “ I am !

“ I am! let my life be as the dust of
 “ your feet, that I may die a martyr to
 “ my fidelity, rather than by disposing
 “ of this picture, prove a traitor to the
 “ confidence of my prince.”

“ Darest thou thus amuse me with
 “ these vain excuses !” replied the prin-
 cess? “ I plainly perceive thy words are
 “ divested of the raiment of truth ;
 “ what is a hand - breadth of paper
 “ sketched over with a trifling picture
 “ to merit the attention of royalty ! and
 “ shall the whim of my fancy,” said
 she, “ be controlled by such an obsti-
 “ nate old man as thou !”

The pretended merchant, prostrat-
 ing himself on the dust, begged her re-
 sentment might not be kindled for the
 destruction of a fly like him. He
 confessed that if she estimated the pic-
 ture according to external appearance,

its value might be computed at a few dinars °; but if, according to the estimation of a mind long prepossessed in favour of the original, both worlds were unequal for the purchase.

“ O fair queen of the age !” continued he, “ the particulars of the story
“ are these. The great Koshilick Chan,
“ king of Choten ^p, in the celestial
“ house of empire, possesses a star, in
“ comparison of which the stars of the
“ firmament above are but dim sparks
“ on the skirts of night. The perfumed
“ praise of this rose-bud of sweetness,
“ had gratified the soul of the young
“ Jehandar, and a treaty being set on
“ foot between the potent princes, for
“ joining these sparkling lights of the

° A small Persian coin.

^p A kingdom of China, bordering on Tartary and Thibet.

“ zodiac

“ zodiac in one constellation, I was de-
 “ puted by Jehandar to carry to her this
 “ precious picture, that it might employ
 “ the hours of her expectation. It was
 “ also given me in charge to draw, if
 “ possible, a faint shadow of her tran-
 “ scendent beauties, to bless his longing
 “ eyes. Thy slave was assured that,
 “ for this service, his toils would be re-
 “ warded with the hand of liberality, so
 “ as to enable him to spend the autumn
 “ of his life in the pleasures of ease and
 “ independence.”

The princess, who had lost her heart
 in play with this deluding picture,
 heard with anxiety every syllable of this
 discourse, and told him it was far from
 her intention to frustrate his long che-
 rished hope : but that if money was
 the object of his wishes, he might at

once satiate his thirst in the stream of her royal bounty.

Benezire bowed his face to the ground, and replied :

“ Fair object of the world’s adora-
 “ tion ! let thy gracious pardon descend
 “ upon the meanest of the slaves of thy
 “ presence, who is himself the painter
 “ of this piece. The disguise in which
 “ thou now beholdest him was merely
 “ for the commodiousness of travelling
 “ through kingdoms, where the useful
 “ merchant finds open the arms of hos-
 “ pitality, and the gates of protection
 “ unfolded. Therefore, in compliance
 “ to thy royal will, if thou shalt permit
 “ thy servant this evening to copy it
 “ off, the morning shall restore it to
 “ your eyes.”

To this the fair Gulzara consented,
 but commanded him to send for his
 imple-

implements, and finish it in one of the gilded pavilions by the gate of the zenana garden.

Benezire kissed the dust of obedience; and Gulzara, like the beam of the west, retired into the golden haram. Here she commanded the attendance of the chief eunuch, and dispatched him to acquaint her royal father with some particulars of the merchant's story, and to beg that such an eminent hand might be permitted to draw her picture, as a present to her intended lord.

The king, whose paternal love had never trespassed the bounds of her pleasure, gave immediate attention to her request; and, accordingly Benezire, was commanded to execute this pleasing difficulty, which, with the outmost exactitude of art, he twice performed to her full satisfaction. He intended, from

the mirror of reflection, to have transcribed a third copy for himself; but what was his agreeable surprize, when, in the weighty purse of gold and jewels her prodigal generosity had conferred upon him, he found one of the pictures concealed.

Thus having accomplished his first intentions, beyond the presumption of his most sanguine hopes, he turned the face of joy to the far-famed kingdom of Hindostan. He soon arrived there in safety, to the no small satisfaction of his longing prince.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

WHEN Benezire had obtained leave to kiss the royal carpets of obeisance, and to express his benedictions in the prince's auspicious presence, he presented the divine resemblance of that incendiary of love to the joy-sparkling eyes of expectation.

The firmament, whose azure veil ten thousand huris^a hides ; the eyes of enchanted fancy wandering over the region of dreams ; nor old Time in the circle of ages, where nature exhibits her skill, such a picture of consummate

^a Nymphs of paradise:

beauty

beauty had ever before beheld ; for lo ! the lap of astonishment was filled with flowers, and the cup of amazement overflowed with the intoxicating wine of joy.

Here the pencil of description, like the stalk of the lilly, from year to year, might put forth new blossoms ; and the pen of imagination, like the tree of Palmyra, become an exhaustless fountain of praise.

The prince, who only saw before the imperfect image of Gulzara in the troubled stream of his fancy, now grasped at this lively resemblance, which shone in the calmer flood of his mind : but, alas ! he was still deceived, and was cast away on the sands of love.

Such was the power of fancy, that a few days after, when he was seated in the tribunal of justice, which his aged
father

father had resigned to him, Jehandar was overpowered by a delirious imagination, and fell headlong from his imperial throne, and lay extended, motionless, on the floor, like a picture wove in the spreading tapestry.

The court was in an immediate uproar, and physicians hastened at the general cry. They, having opened the stagnated channels of life, and with the cold water of roses besprinkled his pallid face, he was again reseatd on his throne, where he sat like a mourner of the dead, bedewing a parent's tombstone.

But, alas ! the poison of love had been absorbed by the arteries of life. He grew distracted ; he threatened his own life ; and the storms of alternate madness and melancholy clouded the face of his refulgent fame.

Nothing

Nothing was heard upon his tongue but the name of this fair enchantress ; and his eyes were never turned but to the Caba^r of his earnest desires, till at length the report of the prince's madness was heard in every street.

The sage counsellors and supporting pillars of the throne now found it necessary to acquaint his royal father of his condition ; and as he drank the sap of his existence from this scion of youth, it quickly withered his old age, and he became, like a lonely tree, blasted in the wilderness of sorrow.

However, calling his unfortunate son into the peaceful apartments of privacy, he began to shed the dew of advice upon the flowers of his decayed under-

^r The temple of Mecca, towards which the Mahommedans always turn their faces when they pray.

standing,

standing, and to open the windows of instruction upon the melancholy dungeon of his mind. But his ears were now deaf to the voice of wisdom, and the once-famed tribunal of reason was barred against the appeal of sense.

The aged king found at length that all his endeavours were in vain; he found that he could not turn him, by the force of persuasion, from the melancholy mazes of madness, and therefore, he began to water the prickly thorn of sorrow from the fountain of exhaustless tears. He then called together his physicians, high skilled in the virtues of every herb; his viziers, long accustomed to untie the intricate knots of difficulty; and magicians versed in the occult powers of enchantment. He offered his choice of the twenty kingdoms of Hindostan to him who should expel
this

this destructive spirit of madness, or administer the balm of peace to his son's afflicted mind.

But after all the powers of art were in vain expended, the fire of imagination gained ascent, and the moon of madness encreased in the hemisphere of his hapless fate; when one of the company of wisdom, as the last resource, proposed this promising expedient which was received with general approbation.

The expedient proposed was this, that night and day should be presented to his mind a fresh picture of the ingratitude and inconstancy of women, composed of such extraordinary circumstances as might engage the ear of attention, till the auditory of reason might be opened, and judgment resume her throne.

C H A P VII.

The Story of the First Companion.

ONE of the chosen in the society of wisdom, unveiling the fair bride of eloquence, introduced her thus upon the flowery carpet of explanation.

There once was a youth who from the flowers of prosperity, drank the dew of happiness, and from the inheritance of his father possessed much wealth. In the exercises of the body and accomplishments of the mind he was unequalled among his companions, and in valor and comeliness unrivalled
among

among his peers. Nor was he less praiseworthy in the extent of his liberality, which brightened the house of his hospitality and gladdened the hearts of his friends.

One day, as he rode through the city, his ears were struck with the voice of sorrow, and, looking round, he beheld an old hard-hearted usurer, assisted by the cutwal's guard*, dragging a beautiful female from the arms of an aged parent, who invoked heaven and earth to pity the severity of his distress.

Touched with compassion at this scene of misery, he stopped and demanded the cause. He was given to understand the father of the young lady was indebted thirty thousand rupees to the old shroff^u, who having

* The mayor or chief magistrate of the city.

^u A money-monger, exchange broker, or banker.

stripped him of all his possessions, was now carrying the daughter into slavery.

Buchtear^w having enquired into the particulars, generously discharged the debt, restored the lady to freedom, the father to joy, and the whole family to the comforts of life.

But as misfortune to the generous mind is often the food of love, Buchtear, in his visits to the family, was affected by the daughter's beauty, which, like a meteor in a dark sky, beamed brighter to his admiring eyes, till he was led, in pursuit of the fair delusion, into the bottomless pit of distress.

When he perceived a due return of his passion, he bound with this fair unfortunate the indissoluble knot of marriage, and pledged with her his heart ;

^w The friend of virtue.

and so enamoured was he of his lot, that, like the assiduous bee, he lived but on the flower of her charms, inso-much that rest was inconsistent with a moment's separation, and pleasure with any pleasure which she did not partake, for his attention prevented her wishes, and his heart was the receptacle of her love.

Nor was she cold to his passion or indifferent to his caresses. She returned them with redoubled ardor, being bound in the chain of his generosity, and caught in the net of his endearments, so that, like a handmaid, she administered to his pleasures, and caught the rising wish in the corner of his amorous eye.

If the foot of separation advanced an uncommon step in the way of worldly business, the bitter gall of sorrow was
poured

poured from the cup of anxiety, and the roses of her cheeks were destroyed in a torrent of tears. In short, the love of this happy pair was become the song of the virgins, and the chime of unwearied fame.

Buchtear had an uncommon propensity to hunting, in which noble exercise he excelled so, that his spear became the dread of the forest, and his arrows the fate of the beasts of the field. By chance he became acquainted with a young man, brother to the ruler of the city, who often shared with him the spoils of the chase, and measured the wine of society under his hospitable roof.

One day the glance of this young man fell on Buchtear's fair lady, and immediately her eyes became fixed upon him. Without waiting for fur-

ther encouragement, this pupil of vice, forgetful of the sacred ties of friendship, permitted the infectious air of lust to fever in his putrid mind: upon his return home, he called one of the age-worne daughters of prostitution, accustomed, like the screech owl of darkness, to ravage the sacred nest of the innocent dove of chastity, and to howl over the ruins of reputation.

This mistress in iniquity, being bribed by the means of gold, with the address and subtilty of satan, insinuated herself, by degrees, into the acquaintance and confidence of this yet unsuspecting fair one. She began to bait the snares of vice with pleasure, and to spread the bird-lime of ruin on the blooming branches of the tree of bliss. But the shy bird, for a long time, would not listen to the call of enchantment, and
was

was blind to the lure of deceit ; yet by degrees she became enamoured with the song, familiar to the objects of danger, and hopped into the inextricable snare.

Thus the soft clay of female composition, unretentive of a grateful or lasting impression, was moulded to the purposes of sin. She consented to sink the fair vessel of her own and her husband's honor in the black whirlpool of infamy ; and to pollute, like a falling flower, the unspotted garments of her perfumed reputation.

When a few days of dear-purchased pleasure had elapsed, and this frail business of her broken fame became whispered among the inhabitants of the same shade, and began to be reverberated from every quarter like the voice of the ghost of murder, in their consci-

ous and affrighted ears, they considered the danger of their situation, and dreamed of nothing but the sword of vengeance impending over their wicked heads. There now remained no means of retrieving their lost peace, or securing their future safety, but by swimming the gulph of wickedness into which they had already so unwarily plunged. They bound a hellish knot of conspiracy, and waited the favor of an opportunity to execute their cursed design.

About the dark hour of midnight, when all was prepared for their scheme, the fair fiend arose from the arms of her husband, and embracing her gallant at the door, they set fire to the four corners of the house, and mounting on horses, half-loaded with gold, jewels, and precious effects, made away. When they perceived that the flames defied the

hands of human labor, they went to a distant city, where, for some time, undisturbed, they enjoyed their adulterous pleasures, covered their heads with the ashes of infamy, and drank the dregs of the cup of fornication.

The unfortunate husband being awakened by the flames, and the noise of the distracted servants, started from his pillow of repose, and, missing his beloved wife, went in quest of her through the floods of fire, till life, by the excessive pain, seemed preparing to desert her untenable abode, and his eyes, with the insufferable heat, to melt in their ivory sockets.

When the fire had consumed the house, the lady was no where to be found, and he concluded, without the shadow of doubt, that she had suffered in the relentless flame. The generous

unsuspecting husband was tossed in the waves of distraction, and thus in bitterness of heart exclaimed !

“ Why, O fate, hast thou spared my life, and robbed me thus of the delight of my soul. It were better to share her sad fortune, than to be left lonely in tears. I am like some vagrant bird which the storm of a winter night has driven far from shore : I am fatigued, I flutter in search of land, but I see nothing but the wild waves that roll beneath. How long shall this frail nature of mine support the toil of grief ? Death should come like a hospitable man, and invite me to his dark but peaceful abode.—My blood already boils in my grief, and soon will the bubble of life burst in air.—And yet this soul is tenacious of its clay, and still fond of its restless dwelling-place. Why dost thou

thou not fledge thy little wings, thou flutterer, that art drowned in grief? What shall I do!—The prophet forbids me to spill this cup of life; yet my cruel destiny might excuse this breach of the will divine.”

Thus mourned the disconsolate husband in the solitary shades of night, but the sun of reason began to dawn with the morning, and he gave orders to search the rubbish that he might pay his last duty of respect to the remains of his best-beloved.

To his no small astonishment he perceived that no signs could be traced by the eye or produced by enquiry. Buchtear was amazed, and he immediately suspected that the lamp of truth had not yet enlightened this scene of darkness, and, going to communicate his surmises to his friend, to pour his distress

press into his bosom, and to receive the balm of consolation from his hand, he was given to understand, that he had been absent since mid-night.

Now the shadows of former doubts became substantial in reason's eye, and from the significant sneers of contempt, he concluded with certainty, that his base friend had plucked the flower of domestic bliss, and contaminated the bed of honor. Yet still a dupe to her deceitful smiles, he could never be brought to believe that she herself had thrown fire into the fair edifice of her own reputation, but that in the hour of confusion and terror, she had been seized by the hand of violence.

In this vain persuasion of her chastity, he dressed himself in dust-coloured sackcloth, and, with wood-ashes, disfiguring his body, concealed a short sword

sword under his garment. He then waving a bundle of peacock feathers in his hand, thus equipped, like a begging fakeer, set out from door to door, and from town to town, to endeavour, if possible, to find out their retreat.

After much fruitless enquiry, he at last lighted on the track of intelligence, and arrived at the door of their lodging. Here he beheld an old woman, of whom he enquired if such a lady was at home, to which she unsuspectingly replied, that she was. At this news Buchtear was so elated, that his girdle burst with joy; so having called the old woman aside, he put a purse of money into her hand, and conjuring her to be faithful, desired she would acquaint her mistress that her husband was in disguise at the door, and if she was desirous of embracing the opportunity of escape,

escape, he was prepared to protect her from the lawless brutality of a thousand villains.

The old daughter of iniquity promised to whisper it in the ear of secrecy, as she said there were much company in the house; and accordingly limping away, like a wisp before the wind, she delivered the husband's message to the lady, who was now sitting, with her particular, quaffing the agat-cup of love-inspiring wine.

She started as from a dream of terror, and, running to the window, beheld her impatient husband walking about in the dress of a dervish*, with the aspect of distraction and pain; then flying to her gallant, she alarmed

* A mendicant, hermit, or devotee, and is the same as a fakeer or collinder.

him

him of their danger, exclaiming, "let us fly! let us fly!" for while yet the hand of revenge is not twisted in the locks of freedom, still of safety there remains some hope.

The gallant ran out, without reply, and ordered two horses to be immediately saddled, at the back-door: but the husband having observed the old woman watching him, through the balcony, now first suspected the treachery of his wife. The fire of rage gained ascent, and rushing into the house, like a hungry wolf which invades the defenceless cottage, he searched from place to place, till accidentally falling on the back-door, he there saw a lady in a veil mounting a horse, in confusion, by the assistance of two peons ^r, while his base

^r Footmen.

friend

friend was prancing upon another around her.

Like the lightning that blasts the trees of the forest, the injured Buchtear, with the flaming sword of vengeance, laid the peons on the dust of death; then flying to the murderer of his honor, would have quenched his revenge in his blood, had he not saved his life by fear, and turned his face to flight.

Buchtear now hesitated about the life of his spouse, but humanity prevailed over anger, and the weakness of a woman who was in his power, proved stronger than an opposing lion.

Accordingly, having seized the reins, he obliged her to dismount; and having purchased new apparel, and provided for his returning journey, he carried her off without a word of reproach,

proach, with intention of restoring her to her parents.

When he had wound up the long line of his distance, and arrived in the environs of his native city, it being now approaching the close of day, to avoid the piercing eye of ridicule, and the sneers of a calumnious world, till the veil of night should conceal the infamous object of his dishonour, he thought proper to halt in a retired grove, and dispatched his servants before, to prepare the house for his reception.

While here he reclined in the shade, the thievish spirit of silent sleep deceived the guards of sense, and, robbing the house of imprudence, left open the doors of danger. The lover, who had traced their rout, arrived in this unlucky hour, and beheld the unfortunate

fortunate Buchtear sleeping, with the snake of his bosom.

The opportunity was too precious to be lost: he drew a dagger from his side, he advanced like a tiger, with caution, towards his prey, with an intention to lengthen his sleep by death. The lady awaking, seized his hand, and whispering, told him it was a pity to give him so easy an exit; let us first, continued she, tie him hand and foot with a strong cord, and afterwards consult together the means of his death, when the eyes of revenge shall be gratified.

This wicked propofal was approved, and when they had almost accomplished their design, the unfortunate Buchtear awoke, and beheld two hellish fiends combined against his life. He now, when too late, repented that he spared
the

the life of the adulterers: " but what
 " fate ordains, said he, no mortal can
 " evade." Rejoicing in her artifice, this
 daughter of wickedness threw the end
 of the rope over a branch of the tree,
 and calling her gallant to her assistance,
 they hoisted him up by the heels like a
 rope-dancer sporting in the air; then
 sitting down before him with her lover,
 embittered the elements of his life with
 sharp taunts, drunk wine from the cup
 of hilarity, and displayed her charms in
 lascivious attitudes before his eyes.

She then devoured hot kisses from
 the trembling lips of lust. At last, the
 yeast of dalliance, the fermenting liquor
 of passion overflowed the vessels of con-
 tinence, both seized the moment of love,
 and the unhappy husband became the
 accursed witness of his own dishonour.

VOL. I.

K

When

When the fair fiend arose, she advanced towards him, and presenting a drawn dagger to his throat, cry'd, " Now thou shalt know the extent of a woman's revenge." But thinking she had not yet sufficiently tormented him, she sat down again by her lover, with intention to add new stings to her inveterate malice.

At length, drunk with debauchery and wine, they reposed their giddy heads on the pillow of misfortune, and left a cup of wine overflowing on the ground by their side. The unfortunate Buchtear, with some glimpse of reviving hope, beheld this imprudent conduct, but was not in a state of capacity to take just reparation for his wrongs; he in the mean time was alarmed with a new and more terrible danger.

Turning

Turning up his eyes to heaven, he beheld a prodigious snake moving along the branch to which he was suspended. The snake made directly towards him, and slowly descending by the cord, glittering in the evening ray, he began to roll his rattling folds round his body, grasping his quivering frame ; then rearing his scaly neck, and brandishing his forked tongue, began to hiss in the distorted face of the pale wretch who was dried up with consuming horror.

“ Heaven ! ” exclaimed he, “ what
 “ black demon is this, darkening the
 “ light of life, and melting the corpo-
 “ real substance ! External danger ex-
 “ cruciates the soul, and internal dis-
 “ ease breaks the bitter gall of accu-
 “ mulated sorrow ! Merciful God ! for
 “ what unheard of guilt should the
 “ bolts of thy vengeance be so forcibly
 K 2 “ hurled

“ hurled against me in this state of pro-
 “ bation, as if eternity itself were too
 “ short for the punishment of my
 “ crimes ! Bite, bite, thou marrow-dry-
 “ ing demon ! Why dost thou delay to
 “ bite ? Let me die ; though I die un-
 “ revenged, let me die, let me die ;
 “ let me descend, thoghu to a fiery
 “ grave, lest I throw the darts of
 “ blasphemy against the impregnable
 “ vault of heaven to revert on my own
 “ head.”

While thus he spoke, the snake, by
 degrees, untwined his glistening folds,
 and descending to the ground, slowly
 dragged his length along, approached
 the sleeping lovers, and as he glided
 over the face of the gallant, the unfor-
 tunate man raised his hand to the place ;
 the snake, apprehensive of danger, seized
 him by the under lip, and his depart-
 ing

ing foul changing for once her untenable abode, flew to the world unknown.

The snake then attracted by the fumes of the wine, dipped his head into the cup, and having drank it half out, let fall some black drops into the remainder from the corner of his venomous jaw ; he then returning by the way he came, carried terror to the soul of Buchtear, but passed over without hurting him, and concealed himself in the hollow of the tree.

The unfortunate Buchtear, on beholding this strange and inexplicable work of Providence, was overwhelmed in a flood of astonishment, but could not yet pretend to prognosticate the final turn of the yet-revolving heavenly wheel.

Thirsty with her debauch, at length the lady awoke, and greedily applying the cup to her lips, drank the dregs of

the cup of fate ; then endeavouring to awake her lover, she perceived he had slept his last, on which she fell headlong from the flowery bank of pleasure, where she sat sporting with love, into the bottomless whirlpool of despair ; and without knowing the cause of his death, revenge became predominant in her malicious soul. She drew the dagger from his side, she ran like a fury to her husband, and pointed it to his naked breast.

The poor husband, deprived of the power of resistance, saw himself once more in the claws of this demon, and while life yet stood trembling on the threshold of existence, he thus exclaimed:

“ O my beloved wife ! is it thus
 “ you repay my unshaken constancy,
 “ and inviolable love ? Hear one word,
 “ one

“ one word, I beseech you, and then let
 “ my fate be determined.”—“ Speak
 “ then,” replied she, “ speak—What
 “ have you to say ?”

The unfortunate Buchtear, with sub-
 missive tone and faltering voice, thus
 began.

“ Patience, my beloved, that I may
 “ breathe!—One moment’s patience
 “ and you shall hear all.—Yes, I am well
 “ assured—this proves to a demonstra-
 “ tion that destiny rules the actions of
 “ of men. Chastity so pure, love so
 “ sincere, and perfections so great, could
 “ never have been blotted from the fair
 “ book of reputation by less than the
 “ hand of Fate. What then can be
 “ said ; since it has pleased the record-
 “ ing angel of the unalterable will of
 “ Providence to write these cruel sen-
 “ tences of misfortune in the diary of

“ our lives.—What can be said ? No.
 “ thing ! What cannot be helped should
 “ be forgotten.

“ The sacred prophets of God were
 “ given up to the temptations of Satan,
 “ that having passed like gold through
 “ the fire they might shine with superior
 “ lustre ; and shall we, poor, imper-
 “ fect, blind mortals, dare to repine at
 “ the decrees of heaven ? Had this
 “ heart been cold to love, susceptible
 “ of revenge, and hardened against
 “ pity, how soon might your fate have
 “ been determined ? But oh that I am
 “ subject to those soft feelings, can
 “ peace ever visit my grave, or death
 “ prove a wall of separation ? No, my
 “ restless spirit shall haunt the scene of
 “ my former joys, and hover over the
 “ bed of your repose.”

“ I now

“ I now swear by the holy prophet
 “ of immortal truth, that not one hair
 “ of these ambrosial locks shall be dis-
 “ composed, nor a member of that de-
 “ licate frame suffer injury, if you un-
 “ tie these hands. If I have unwarily
 “ offended ; let my faults be concealed
 “ by the skirts of your mercy, and let
 “ our former happiness be restored and
 “ even augmented by reflecting on past
 “ misfortunes ; for it is known that love,
 “ when pruned by the hand of adver-
 “ sity, encreases in fruit like the vine,
 “ and at the departure of winter the
 “ fragrance of the returning season is
 “ sweeter than the full year.”

While thus, on the excruciating rack
 of pain, the wretched husband tempo-
 rized with his impending fate, the poi-
 son began by degrees to inflame her in-
 compassionate

compassionate bowels, and the spasms of convulsive death to rend her frame, till at length she fell foaming on the ground, and expired in the agonies of pain.

While Buchtear was returning thanks to heaven for interposing the divine hand, one of the servants returned and unbound him. So having related the particulars to the astonished magistrates, they ordered them to be interred on the spot, and the story to be engraved on their tomb.

Therefore, O sublime prince ! to be distracted with the external beauty of a woman, and haunt the painted rainbow of imagination in the clouded sky of madness, is inconsistent with thy noble self and the dictates of true wisdom ; for be assured the fair flower
of

of the female cheek never sheds the
sweet odour of gratitude.

When fate wrote down the fair ca-
talogue of female virtues, a blot fell
upon gratitude from his pen.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

The Story of the Second Companion.

THIS unmerciful tearer of the robes of chastity, having concluded his strange story, another old impotent blackener of female fame thus blotted the page of divine beauty.

We are told, that as once a select party of friends were enjoying themselves under a sham-miana^p, pitched in a publick garden, enhancing with mirth, wit, and wine, the bright charms of social conversation, they were accosted by a handsome stranger, who, with un-

^p A kind of canopy.

common ease and freedom, paying his respects to the company, without waiting the formality of invitation, immediately composed part of the circle. Sullen silence and astonishment began to reign at his impertinent intrusion.

Unabashed at this cold reception he began to open the fountains of eloquence, and to wash the dust of discontent from every face with the perfumed water of cheerfulness. He therefore from an intruder was presently deemed an acquisition to their pleasurable society.

Though this gentleman was comely in person, and genteel in deportment, his face was somewhat disfigured by a deep scar; and as unusual freedom was justified by his manners, one of the company had the curiosity to enquire in

what action he had received that honorable wound.

The youth laughed at the question, but evaded a direct reply, which made the company conclude there must be something particular in the affair, so that they joined in their importunities, till Kerimulla thus gratified their curiosity, though unwillingly, at his own expence.

“ Thank God, I am a stranger to all
 “ war, except the war of domestic strife.
 “ My father, being ruler of the pro-
 “ vince of Biana, left me in the flower
 “ of youth possessed of an ample for-
 “ tune; with this I began to run in the
 “ giddy circle of pleasure, and in the
 “ company of inviting damsels, whose
 “ dancing attitudes were expressive of
 “ love, and whose melodious songs in-
 “ spired desire.

“ I spent

“ I spent the fair morning of
 “ youth in the continued round of suc-
 “ cessive enjoyments but ; at length
 “ appetite began to pall upon plenty,
 “ and I envied the happiness of a mar-
 “ ried friend, who was so full of his
 “ own condition that he often pressed
 “ me to follow his example. He painted
 “ the joys of the matrimonial state in
 “ such lively colours, that I began to
 “ consider him as the happiest of mor-
 “ tals.

“ Being inseparable companions in
 “ every innocent amusement, we set
 “ out one morning towards the moun-
 “ tains, to arrest with the quivering
 “ lance the swift measurers of the
 “ forest, and to pierce with the uner-
 “ ring arrow from the elastic bow the
 “ swift voyagers of the sounding air.

“ There

" There high, in an airy cliff, we
 " beheld an enormous simurg^a, darting
 " with strange impetuosity against a
 " cave in the impending rock. We
 " gazed for some time at this uncom-
 " mon sight, yet unable to comprehend
 " the cause. At length, fermented by
 " curiosity, I grasped at the forelock
 " of danger, and in spite of the wise
 " remonstrances of my friend, began
 " to climb the steep cloud-piercing rock
 " untrodden by the foot of ages.

" After much idle time in ballance-
 " ing life against a straw, folly against
 " danger, and straining the sinews of
 " toil till my heart almost beat through
 " my bosom, swinging like a monkey
 " by one paw, like a spider by an in-

^a A fabulous bird.

" visible

“ visible hair, or a hindoo in the rage
 “ of devotion”. I arrived near the cave.
 “ I then for the first time ventured to
 “ look down, and with dizzy eyes be-
 “ held the trees of the forest dwindled
 “ to shrubs, my sturdy companion to a
 “ pigmy, and the dusky-backed kites,
 “ through the clouds beneath, sailing
 “ on balanced wing!

“ Turning from the awful sight, I
 “ bent my eyes upon the impending
 “ distance, but was in danger of being
 “ blown away by the wind of the simurg’s
 “ pinions, yet shame would not permit
 “ me to retreat, till I had accomplished
 “ my rash undertaking. Having at
 “ length reached the cave, with ter-

* The hindoo fanaticks hang themselves up
 by iron hooks inserted through the skin of their
 backs, and swing round on the end of a beam,
 on a certain festival.

"ror I beheld a monstrous serpent coiled,
 "in a bloody nest, devouring the cal-
 "low young of the simurg.

"Rearing half his length, like a rising
 "pillar of smoke, rolling his fiery eyes,
 "suffused with deadly venom, and open-
 "ing wide his fatal jaw, he darted, hiss-
 "ing, towards me. Convulsed with
 "horror, I hung by the rock, unable
 "to quit my hold, and that instant, by
 "the favour of providence, the angry
 "simurg, stooping down, darted his
 "horny claws in the serpent's scaly neck,
 "who, writhing himself with the pain,
 "and casting round his tail, bound me
 "up in scaly folds.

"Let imagination now conceive the
 "wretchedness of a condition which I
 "shudder still to relate. It seems at
 "present like a dream of horror. My
 "unhappy companion below, wringing
 "the

" the hands of sorrow, was witness to
 " the extremity of my distress, and in-
 " stantly hastened to my relief, with his
 " bow depending from his shoulder,
 " and a quiver of arrows by his side.
 " Not being able to approach the place,
 " he leant his back against a tree on the
 " rock, and having no other power of
 " assistance but the desperate chance of
 " his powerful bow, he drew a long
 " arrow to the point, and aiming with
 " an unerring eye, gave wing to the
 " whizzing dart, which quenched its
 " hissing steel in the eye of the voracious
 " serpent.

" The monster, starting with pain,
 " threw me, sprawling like a frog, in
 " the nest; he then rolled down the
 " precipice, drew after him the scream-
 " ing simurg, who could not withdraw

“ his talons nor bear the serpent’s
“ weight.

“ Here I awoke as from a dream of
“ horror, and looking round me be-
“ held the bloody cave strewed with
“ bleached bones, and the yet quivering
“ remains of the simurg’s feathered
“ brood; then girding my aching
“ loins, while I prepared to descend
“ the rock, my ears were alarmed by
“ a rushing noise like a whirlwind tra-
“ versing the woods, my eyes were
“ darkened by a deep shade, like a
“ passing cloud over the sun in autumn,
“ and looking up I beheld the other
“ simurg returning to her ruined nest.

“ When her keen-piercing eye, like
“ the eye of day, first discovered the
“ destructive scene, inflamed at the
“ sight, with a hideous scream, she
“ darted down upon her trembling prey,
“ and

“ and seized me by the back, and car-
 “ ried me through the air as an eagle
 “ a kid which browses upon the rocks
 “ of Peshawir^b. Her crooked talons
 “ being fixed in the many folds of
 “ my girdle behind, I happily received
 “ no hurt, but hung with my face to
 “ the earth like a messenger of the su-
 “ perior spheres pictured in the cupolas
 “ of Cabul^c. Seeing the distant earth
 “ lessening to my view, I expected every
 “ moment to drop headlong among the
 “ mountains, that now appeared like
 “ mole-hills below.

“ But the extended arm of provi-
 “ dence was pleased to interpose, and
 “ the simurg unable or unwilling to re-
 “ sign her hold, descended gradually to

^b Mountains that divide Hindostan from Persia.

^c A city on the frontiers of Hindostan to the northwest.

" the earth, and alighted where the
 " serpent lay twisted around her dead
 " companion. Here she was preparing
 " to make me the unfortunate victim of
 " her rage, and raising her crooked
 " bill, like a grave-digger's mattock,
 " would have pierced through my
 " scull at one mortal blow, had not my
 " brave companion observed the extre-
 " mity of my case, and, hastening to my
 " relief, poised his quivering lance,
 " and darting it from his nervous arm,
 " with fate beaming upon the point, it
 " hissed invisibly along, and buried itself
 " deep in the breast of the voracious
 " serpent. Drawing then from his
 " manly side the bright sword of valor,
 " he advanced, and with one blow laid
 " her head upon the bloody ground.

" Thus relieved from my distress,
 " my fears and astonishment subsided,
 " and

“ and I found myself in the kind arms
 “ of my friendly and brave deliverer.
 “ Now a gleam of the sunshine of joy
 “ beamed fair on the horizon of our
 “ fate ; but how soon did the night of
 “ sorrow involve us in utter darkness !

“ As we contemplated with astonish-
 “ ment those monsters that were slaugh-
 “ tered around us, my companion un-
 “ fortunately attempting to draw the
 “ arrow from the eye of the serpent,
 “ that bestower of instant death, and
 “ most tenacious preserver of life, closed
 “ upon his unwary hand the invenomed
 “ jaws of fate : my friend exclaimed, ‘ I
 “ die ! I die ! Be careful of my dear
 “ wife, who has nothing now to trust in
 “ but heaven and your friendly boun-
 “ ty.’ He fell motionless upon the
 “ dust of death.

“ My eyes grew dim at the sight,
 “ the mountains seemed as falling upon
 “ me, I dropped down fainting by his
 “ side; for so close were we ingrafted in
 “ friendship, that we seemed to draw
 “ life but from one fountain. But soon
 “ reason resumed her abode; and as the
 “ irrevocable sentence of his fate was
 “ entered in the records of heaven, no-
 “ thing was now left me but sorrow,
 “ no, not even the consolatory hope of
 “ overtaking my departed friend.

“ Now the red orb of day descended
 “ into the western deep, and already
 “ the howling savages of the forest be-
 “ gan to be heard from their dens. My
 “ friend lay unburied, no hand of assist-
 “ ance was near, my limbs were in-
 “ nervated by toil; and to leave his be-
 “ loved remains a prey to the beasts of
 “ the field was a scorpion to my soul.

“ What

“ What could I do ? With my spear
 “ in my hand and my bow depending
 “ from my left arm, I stalked about
 “ like a ghost round a grave, mourn-
 “ ing his deserted clay. But when na-
 “ ture was shrouded in darkness, the
 “ ear of the listening night startled at
 “ the lion’s roar, and the blood was
 “ congealed in my veins by the howl
 “ of the prowling jackal.

“ Now I fancied the breath of the
 “ passing breeze a fierce panther, in the
 “ rustling shade, and the sound of my
 “ own feet the tread of approaching
 “ danger. In the mean time I confi-
 “ dered my precarious life as a bubble
 “ in this tempestuous ocean. I fortu-
 “ nately recollected an adjoining cavern,
 “ whither I retired with my precious
 “ charge, and sat down in the sepul-
 “ chre of sorrow.

“ Now

“ Now I listened to the beasts’ of
 “ prey, gorging themselves in the scene
 “ of slaughter, and about the dark hour
 “ of midnight was alarmed by two
 “ lights burning at the mouth of the
 “ cavern—snatching my trusty bow,
 “ and drawing a broad arrow to my
 “ ear, I discharged it at the glaring
 “ objects, when instantly a deep growl
 “ resounded through the recesses of the
 “ cave, and the falling stones from the
 “ frightened roof came rattling all around
 “ me.

“ My bounding heart recoiled, my
 “ hair stood stiff with horror, and the
 “ faithful weapon of my best defence
 “ fell from my trembling hand.

“ Here I sat till tardy morning drew
 “ the curtains of long expected day.
 “ At the mouth of the cave I saw dead
 “ a monstrous tiger, with my arrow,
 “ between

" between his eyes, buried deep in his
 " brains. In a short time my ears were
 " saluted with the cry of approaching
 " hounds, and lo! a smoaking stag
 " bounded across the field. His fierce
 " pursuers breathed on his sounding
 " heels. He was seized: he ploughed
 " up the soil of the forest with his
 " horns, and watered the earth with the
 " torrent of his innocent blood.

" Now, mounted on foaming steeds,
 " the joyful companions of the chase
 " came, gleaming in arms, through
 " the wood, and on observing me lean-
 " ing against the rock, with the tigers
 " extended at my feet, they crowded
 " in amazement around me. But what
 " was the greatness of their astonish-
 " ment when they heard the particulars
 " of my story, and had the satisfac-
 " tion

“ tion of convincing their eyes by undeniable evidences of truth.

“ Having now conveyed the body
“ to the house of my friend’s afflicted
“ widow, we performed his funeral obsequies with all the solemnities and
“ pomp of woe. At the conclusion of
“ this scene of grief, in remembrance of
“ his dying words, I returned to the
“ house of sorrow, and having acquainted his weeping wife of his request, gave her assurance of my strict
“ compliance.

“ Her whole behavior on this occasion was so exquisitely adapted to her
“ condition, while her beauties appeared so advantageously in the
“ azure robes of mourning, that I
“ viewed her with such pleasure as a

“ One of the mourning colours in India.

“ wrecked

"wrecked mariner views the serene
 "sky when the tempest smooths his
 "rugged brow; I conceived, by the
 "power of fancy, that the bright tears
 "of her eyes were beautiful as the fall-
 "ing stars of heaven.

"How powerful is the eloquence of
 "grief, and how affecting the distresses
 "of beauty! generosity, gratitude, and
 "pity conspired with the charms of
 "this fair camelion, to enchant me
 "into the snare of love. Seven weeks
 "like seven years passed over my sleep-
 "less head, till the sad raiment of sor-
 "row was changed for the fair robes
 "of comfort, and then I ventured to
 "disclose, by words, the progress of
 "her conquering charms.

"For some time she was deaf to my
 "intreaties; but when the time of her
 "probation was past, and she per-
 "ceived,

"ceived, by the value of my presents,
 "the extent of my unbounded love,
 "she consented that the jewel of her
 "beauty should sparkle in the wedding
 "ring.

"My joy on this happy occasion
 "had almost amounted to madness,
 "inasmuch that my heart, like a spor-
 "tive fish, had almost leapt from the
 "water of life. Every hour, not em-
 "ployed in pleasing, seemed a blank in
 "the records of time, and every mo-
 "ment of cruel separation a pause in
 "the course of my beating blood;
 "till, at length, all our passions were
 "so united, that the whole seemed a
 "nosegay of bliss, or garland of unfad-
 "ing pleasure. Our nights were spent
 "in joy, and our days in ease. Our
 "only strife was who could yield each
 "other the greatest pleasure. Our only
 "sports

“ sports were love, our stakes were
 “ kisses, and all our care was to pay
 “ those pleasing debts.

“ Thus three fleeting years, cloathed
 “ like the birds of paradise, winged
 “ over us their auspicious flight. Then
 “ the ardor of her passion became sen-
 “ sibly cooled towards me ; and one
 “ night, waked by the imperial music ;
 “ like Adam, I missed my rib from my
 “ side. But, like him, sensible of no
 “ wound, after lying awake for some
 “ time, I turned myself over to sleep.
 “ But the next night, finding myself
 “ abandoned in the same manner, the
 “ air of suspicion began to ruffle the
 “ calm surface of my mind ; and upon
 “ the third night, being served as be-
 “ fore, the storm of my jealousy began,

“ The beating of the military drums.

“ to

“ to rage, and put the whole element
 “ of my life in commotion.

“ Now my eyes could no more set
 “ in sleep; but, like the eyes of the
 “ northern bear, still rolled round the
 “ pole of expectation; when the third
 “ par^f of the night, like the summons
 “ of death, struck in my listening ears,
 “ the hinges of the door gave warning.
 “ But her foot was like the foot of
 “ sleep invading the bed of toil; and,
 “ as if the whole had been only a dream,
 “ I found my chaste wife in my own
 “ bosom. But unfortunately in this case
 “ of concernment, I was rather obstinate
 “ to the delusions of fancy, and pro-
 “ tested against all doubt. Burning for

^f The space of three hours, four of which go
 to the night and four to the day, commencing
 the day with the dawn, and the night with the
 twilight.

“ revenge,

“ revenge, wished only to know the
 “ snake that had poisoned my bliss.
 “ For this purpose it was necessary to
 “ conceal my suspicions, and accord-
 “ ingly I pretended sleep.

“ The next day, that the vapor of
 “ sorrow might not be seen on my
 “ clouded brow, I set out in the morn-
 “ ing to the chase; but instead of hunt-
 “ ing the beasts of the field, I was hunt-
 “ ed from place to place by the hounds
 “ of my own misfortune; at length,
 “ at the approach of night, I sought
 “ shelter in my hated abode, but the
 “ arrow stuck deep in my side, and
 “ rankled in my festering liver.

“ On pretence of a fall from my
 “ horse, I concealed my internal anxiety,
 “ and soon after going to bed, pre-
 “ tended pain would not permit me to
 “ sleep; upon which my dear wife pro-

“ posed a composing draught. She pre-
 “ pared it with her own hand, of such
 “ strength as to compose me for ever.
 “ She brought it for me to drink; having
 “ tasted it, I perceived the strength of
 “ the opiate, and desiring her to bring
 “ me some water, poured the draught
 “ into a convenient utensil, and telling
 “ her I drank it off, laid my head on
 “ the pillow of anxiety, and counter-
 “ feited to sleep most profoundly.

“ When my kind wife imagined she
 “ had shut the doors of sense for ever,
 “ she arose from my side, and leaping
 “ over the court wall, was immediately
 “ in the public street. Taking a sword
 “ under my arm, and concealing my
 “ face in my mantle, I quickly pursued
 “ her at a distance, while she skipped
 “ along like a rabbit in the night, and
 “ was presently without the suburbs.

“ In

“ In the environs of the city, there
 “ was a little mosque and a neat villa,
 “ occupied by a fat collinder, who, from
 “ the apparent sanctity of his manners,
 “ was deemed a prodigy of holiness, and
 “ consulted by half the city to direct
 “ them in the way of salvation. - At
 “ first I blamed the rashness of my sus-
 “ picions, and imagined my beloved
 “ wife was only tainted by the madness
 “ of devotion ; yet resolved to observe
 “ her actions, I climbed up into a tree
 “ before the door, from which the house
 “ lay open before me.

“ Here I beheld the unweildy col-
 “ linder, sitting upon a carpet, between
 “ the pillows of ease, twisting up his
 “ whiskers to his ears, and scolding my
 “ wife, who sat down before him, while
 “ at intervals he raised to his head a

“ draught of intoxicating bang^s; at
 “ length he seemed quite enraged,
 “ and seizing a sturdy bambo^h belaboured her shoulders, upbraiding
 “ her for long delay.

“ Upon this she fell down on her
 “ knees and begged forgiveness, telling
 “ him that some spirit of inquietude had
 “ that night possessed her husband, but
 “ at last she had found out the means
 “ of conjuring him to eternal rest. Having related the particulars to the fakier, who embraced her, he praised
 “ her artifice, and proceeded to such
 “ intolerable lengths in lasciviousness, that I was descending with the
 “ sword of revenge. In the mean time

^s The infusion of a certain herb somewhat similar to female hemp.

^h A large kind of hollow cane.

“ the

“ the collinder stepping out, came at
 “ that instant directly to the root of
 “ the tree ; I with one blow of the sabre
 “ rolled his head, like a football, on the
 “ ground.

“ Determined to see the event, I
 “ again took my place in the tree.
 “ My wife, in the rage of impa-
 “ tience, came peeping with the eyes
 “ of enquiry. When she saw that he
 “ did not return, she began to charm
 “ his deaf ears with an inviting song of
 “ love ; but, alas ! the headless fowl
 “ would crow no more at her call.

“ At length she walked out into the
 “ grove, and seeing her murdered lover,
 “ she exalted the voice of woe ; but
 “ soon her brow, like the brow of win-
 “ ter, was clouded with a storm of rage,
 “ and running into the house, she re-
 “ turned like a fury with a drawn dag-

“ger in one hand, and a lighted flam-
 “beau blazing in the other.

“With these, with her hair in the
 “wind, she explored every corner of the
 “garden; and had the roaring lion inter-
 “vened, she would certainly have singled
 “his beard. Meeting with no object
 “for her resentment, she returned dis-
 “consolate to her dead lover, and lest
 “enquiry should be made about the
 “murder by his servants, who were
 “privy to the intrigue, she rolled the
 “body up in the carpet. She then bent
 “her back to the burthen, and trudged
 “along to the bank of the river, and
 “there threw it like a log into the
 “stream.

“As she now turned her face towards
 “home, I hastened by another way, and
 “having returned to my contaminated
 “bed, pretended to be fast asleep. In
 “a

“ a short time she arrived also, and hav-
 “ ing washed herself in the bath, ap-
 “ proached me with a candle in her
 “ hand, with which she burnt the hair
 “ of my eyelids; she then felt my pulse,
 “ and perceiving that I had still vital
 “ motion, she laid herself down by my
 “ side.

“ When I arose, to her surprize, in
 “ the morning, she was prodigiously
 “ inquisitive about my health; and, as
 “ I intended publickly to repudiate
 “ her, I still concealed her offence in
 “ my breast; but as I was bathing, ac-
 “ cording to custom, being in want of
 “ an ewer of rosewater, and no servant
 “ at that time being near, I requested
 “ that favour of my wife.

“ Accordingly she put forth her
 “ hand, with such delicacy as to a rose,

“ and drawing it back, as if pricked
 “ by the stalk, with the lispng tongue
 “ of affectation exclaimed, ‘ Dear Sir,
 “ it is so prodigiously heavy, indeed it
 “ is—pray call a slave—you must think
 “ me very strong to be able to move
 “ this weight.’ I was enraged—I cried
 “ out, ‘ A curse on your delicacy and
 “ affectation. Is it a tenth part so heavy
 “ as the collinder?’

“ Her inflammable constitution took
 “ immediate fire, and the drops of in-
 “ dignation distilled from her reddening
 “ forehead. She darted the eyes of a
 “ basilisk upon me; she snatched up the
 “ sword, wherewith I had killed the
 “ collinder, and, before I could disarm
 “ her, inflicted this dishonourable
 “ wound.

“ When I was returning thanks to the
 “ Almighty for my miraculous delivery
 “ from

“ from the tooth of this venomous dra-
 “ gon who was enraged the more by dis-
 “ appointment, she ran out to the public
 “ street, and setting loose her hair to the
 “ wind, dashed her forehead on the
 “ stones, and with the voice of distrac-
 “ tion exclaimed :

“ Ah ! unhappy woman ! Oh ! cruel
 “ fate ! O good gracious heaven ! Is it
 “ thus our devotions are repaid ? Shall
 “ thus an inhuman husband, bit by the
 “ mad dog of jealousy, be permitted
 “ to destroy the righteous in his rage ?
 “ Shall a monster of cruelty, dropping
 “ with the blood of a saint, by the
 “ contagious breath of scandal infect the
 “ pure body of chastity, and to cover the
 “ heinous crime, raise the same bloody
 “ weapon of murder against the throat
 “ of the wife of his bosom ? To whom
 “ shall I fly for help ! Protect me, O
 “ my

“ my innocence ! There behold the
 “ ghost of the holy collinder comes
 “ from his watery bed ! his bloody head
 “ in his right hand ! Ah ! why wouldst
 “ thou force an unhappy woman thus
 “ to witness against her husband’s life ?”

“ This pupil of Satan, in such strains,
 “ accused me directly of the murder ;
 “ so that I was immediately torn from
 “ my house, by the hands of an abu-
 “ sive populace, and dragged before
 “ the siddur-ul-siddurⁱ, where my wife
 “ swore, that in a mad fit of jealousy
 “ I followed her to her private devo-
 “ tions at the house of the holy dirvesh,
 “ which was frequented by many ladies
 “ of character and reputation, who were
 “ mindful of the good of their souls ;
 “ that while she was kneeling on the

ⁱ The lord chief justice, or literally judge of judges.

“ carpet

“ carpet at her prayers, I rushed, like
 “ a madman, into the house, and fall-
 “ ing upon the good old man, mur-
 “ dered him before her eyes; but that
 “ I was wounded by some means in the
 “ scuffle: that afterwards, to conceal
 “ the deed, I bound up the body in the
 “ carpet, while I seized her by the hair,
 “ and led her to the bank of the river,
 “ where I had thrown the corps; and
 “ was on the point of throwing her in
 “ also, had she not sworn to her inno-
 “ cence and secrecy. But that as I
 “ had again attempted her life at home,
 “ and as she was tormented by her own
 “ conscience, as well as by the spirit of
 “ the deceased, she was unwillingly
 “ compelled to make this testimony of
 “ the truth, and expose this deed of
 “ darkness.

“ This

“ This evidence, however false in
 “ some particulars, was so strong against
 “ me upon the whole, that I attempted
 “ not to vindicate my innocence, but
 “ unveiled every circumstance of the
 “ truth, bowing my head to the mercy
 “ of my judge, and commending my
 “ soul to heaven: As no price for the
 “ blood of the collinder could prevail
 “ with his inexorable friends, the aw-
 “ ful sentence of my death was pro-
 “ nounced, and I was thrust into a
 “ frightful dungeon, where my chains
 “ were less heavy than my grief, for
 “ thus suffering so unjust condemna-
 “ tion.

“ In the mean time the servants of
 “ the collinder gave information that
 “ they had often been witnesses to the
 “ incontinence of my wife with their
 “ master, and that they had seen her
 “ that

“ that very night through a chink of
 “ the door, carrying off the carpet her-
 “ self. That the collinder was not
 “ murdered in the house, according
 “ to her evidence; but that, as he never
 “ returned on his going to the door, it
 “ was probable my confession was the
 “ the truth; and that their conscience
 “ would not therefore permit them to
 “ let the innocent be sacrificed for the
 “ guilty.

“ By this evidence my sentence was
 “ revoked, and my adulterous wife con-
 “ demned to the punishment of our
 “ righteous law. Since which time I
 “ have forsworn all further connections
 “ with the sex, and have exchanged the
 “ gratifications of the body for the
 “ purer pleasures of the mind; repos-
 “ ing on the pillow of peace, and slum-
 “ bering in the shades of retirement;
 “ while

“ while women are but airy bubbles,
 “ tossed on the sea of vanity, which
 “ shine bright to the eye, but prove
 “ deceitful to every other sense; their
 “ virtue is brittle as glass, that when
 “ once broken cannot be mended; they
 “ are like musk when used discreetly,
 “ pleasing and grateful to the sense,
 “ but too much cherished are sure to
 “ prove offensive; they are, like many
 “ poisonous fruits, enchanting to the
 “ sight in their glowing colours, but as
 “ they ripen they take a darker hue.”

CHAP.

C H A P. IX.

The Story of the Third Companion.

WE are told of a king in the empire of Turan ^k who placed the foot of his throne on the blue arch of heaven, and rubbed the corner of his crown on the shoulder of orion.

One of his distant viceroys, who had always bowed the neck of subjection to the yoke of authority, and laid the forehead of obedience upon the line of his royal commands, at length intoxicated

^k Tartary.

by power, wealth, pride, and the valour of his armies, advanced the foot of presumption against his lord, and exalted the standard of defiance upon the field of war, pouring the torrent of devastation upon the boundaries of Turan.

The king, pointing with the scepter of power, commanded a mighty chan of the presence with ten tomans¹ of his valiant soldiers, to advance against this foe of tranquillity, and to quench this world-consuming flame of war in the bright water of the polished sword. He commanded him not to fail with the hand of punishment to turn the discordant ears of rebellion to the divine harmony of true government.

The wife of this great commander, in the season of danger and absence, em-

¹ A toman is a body of ten thousand men.

braced sorrow in the curtains of night,
and passed her days on the thorns of
anxiety; till one of her attending
maids, observing that the dark cloud of
melancholy, which lowered on her
fair forehead, was not to be dispelled
but by the bright eyes of pleasure, one
evening in private thus addressed her :

“ Bright pattern of excellence, bless-
“ ed with grandeur, wealth, and fame,
“ and these eminently graced with
“ beauty transcendently fair! where-
“ fore should the worm of sorrow pam-
“ per upon the rose of sweetness, or
“ the smothering fire of grief consume
“ the incense of this exhilarated age?
“ Now, alas! the veil of darkness shades
“ the hemisphere of our former joys,
“ since that fair countenance, obscured
“ by the clouds of melancholy, con-
“ tracts its radiant beams, and wanes

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N

“ like

“ like the departing moon. The world
 “ is scarce a year of duration : Life is
 “ but the butterfly of a day : The sun-
 “ shine of happiness beameth but for
 “ an hour, and shall a moment be lost
 “ in despair? Then, quickly, let the
 “ wings of pleasure be expanded; per-
 “ mit me to display the fragrant blof-
 “ som of felicity, and the honied flower
 “ of terrestrial bliss.”

The lady raising the ear of attention,
 this fair deceiver was encouraged to pro-
 ceed :

“ As the nobility are but the sha-
 “ dows of their fathers, and the mush-
 “ rooms of a luxurious soil lubricated
 “ by the oil of pleasure, and cloyed
 “ with the honey of love, it were vain
 “ to seek enjoyment from those who
 “ are callous to enjoyment themselves.

“ Have

“ Have you not heard that in this
 “ city there is a young jeweller, who in
 “ handiomeness, manliness, and stature
 “ far excels every youth of the age, as
 “ much as a pillar of marble excels a
 “ poor pyramid of clay? Here strength
 “ is so united with beauty as to dou-
 “ ble the effects of both; for while ad-
 “ miration is delighted with the state-
 “ liness of the tree, envy is stung by
 “ the bee on the blossom; and while
 “ we flutter round the lustre, like the
 “ moth, we court our fate in the beams
 “ of his eyes. His perfections, like
 “ those of the diamond, are held in es-
 “ timation by all; and his fame, like
 “ the gold of Sumatra, passes current
 “ through all nations. Were I pos-
 “ sessed of ten thousand lives, and ten
 “ thousand virgin charms, to resign
 “ them for one hour’s happiness in his

“ embraces would be my first prayer
 “ to heaven.”

“ I perceive,” said the lady, “ that
 “ you are captivated with this fellow ;
 “ what have I to do with your amours ?”

“ It is impossible to be otherwise,”
 replied the nymph ; “ for those who
 “ have had the pleasure of seeing him.
 “ Though I meant nothing more than
 “ to divert your imagination from the
 “ rugged paths of sorrow into the
 “ flowery walks of joy, to the sweet
 “ musick of love, every part would
 “ thrill with fierce desire, and every
 “ nerve vibrate to the heart, were he
 “ to touch the melodious nei^m ; the
 “ very thought makes my bosom beat :
 “ Oh ! how I burn ! through every pore
 “ distill the liquid fires. His breath

^m A Flute.

“ is like the Cushmanian breeze, his lip
 “ like the rosebuds of spring, where
 “ wanton maidens would cling like
 “ bees to suck the honey of delight.”

The deceiver, whose voice was sweet as the voice of the nightingale, here paused in the harmonious song, leaving the attentive lady in the distracting wilderness of a warm imagination. She began now to think of tearing the sacred veil of virtue from the face of her chastity, to run backward in the paths of reputation, and to plunge headlong into the gulph of vice.

Nothing pleased her imagination, but flattering schemes to accomplish her wishes, while this daughter of delusion, to gain by her services, and the more to inflame her mind, contrived insurmountable difficulties and imaginary dangers, to make her projects embrace delay.

At length, finding that the bow was bent, she gave head to the arrow of design, and arraying her mistress, in the manner of the smiling pirries, in a flowing robe of gold, decorated with enestimable jewels, of starry lustre, cried “Heaven! what heart can resist?”

A glory, like the bow, seemed a guard to her splendid presence, while the enchantress of the firmamentⁿ shed profusion of musk on her beauties, and taught her charms new enchantments. Her kindling eyes darted delusion, and her smiles were more dangerous than the frowns of rage. She gave blossoms to the firve^o, which she resembled in stature, and bad the lily rise and accompany her steps. The clustering pearls shone around her like the pleiades

ⁿ The moon,

^o The cypress.

around

around the moon, and the sparkling of her jewels was the radiant light of her paths.

But as her work was the work of darkness, she was advised to veil the lustre of her beauties, while, with the handmaid of her dishonour, like a flower unfolding its sweets to the tainting air, she threw open the door of her reputation, and hastened to the public bazar. She was conducted to the house of the jeweller, who presented himself to receive her commands.

After trifling for some time to gratify the eyes of desire, she pulled a large topaz from her pocket, resembling a fiery coal, and giving it into his hand, with a delicate pressure, desired, with a languishing voice, " It might be set

N 4

" in

“ in an elegant sirpesh^p, surrounded
 “ with rubies and diamonds in the most
 “ curious taste of fancy and exquisite
 “ polish of art.” In the mean time,
 with a motion of exceeding grace, she
 drew her veil like a cloud from the
 face of morning, gilded with the beams
 of day, which when the astonished jeweller beheld, he dropped the topaz
 from his trembling hand.

The fair deluder, smiling, in the
 pride of beauty, now asked him “ If
 “ he ever was in love ?” The youth
 recovering his presence of mind, fell
 down at her feet, and replied,

“ O! fair robber of hearts! that
 “ smile hath enchanted my soul, those
 “ brows dart the arrows of love, and
 “ these hands seize the reins of my reason.

^p An egret or jewel worn on the forehead, as
 the word implies.

“ For

“ For heaven’s sake do not leave me
 “ to bleed in the wilderness of sorrow
 “ and despair, but tell me in what pa-
 “ radise you reside, that for the hire
 “ of beholding your beauties, I may
 “ be numbered among your slaves for
 “ ever?”

The smiling bestower of favour, in
 the manner of the magical Samarites¹,
 pulling a looking-glass from her fair
 bosom, having its surface darkened with
 ink, for a moment placed it before him,
 then receiving a cup of water from the
 hand of her maid, mixed it with some
 leaves of the chinar, and threw it before
 the door, saying,

¹ Possibly he means the Samaritans, who are
 among the Mahomedans renowned for magic :
 otherwise Samari, who is said to have made the
 golden calf, which they imagine was indued
 with speech.

“ My

“ My abode is a lofty castle, on
 “ whose airy battlements the birds of
 “ heaven seldom rest their wearied
 “ wings : and shall you attempt to im-
 “ pell the horse of ambition against
 “ the precipice of danger, or place the
 “ foot of presumptuous rashness in the
 “ jaw of the devouring crocodile ? Can
 “ an atom of dust aspire to the chariot
 “ of the sun, or a gnat wing its way
 “ to yon azure firmament of heaven ?”

So saying, she took her way to her
 abode, while the jeweller, overwhelmed
 with amaze, neglected his setting star,
 and was wrecked upon the sands of love.
 A while he fought with the storm of
 passion, but the moon of madness swelled
 the wave. He threw behind him the
 implements of his profession, he walked
 melancholy home, reflecting on the op-
 portunity he had lost, which threw him
 into

into the pit of despair. He attempted, with the hand of distraction, to tear the barbed arrow from his heart, though it had sunk to the moistened wing.

The penetrating eye of his wife soon pierced to the bottom of his condition, for now the bright orb of his countenance was wading through the mist of sorrow, and the morning of his florid cheeks changed to a dusky hue. But being an adept in the mysteries of love, and a proficient in female subtilty, she wound herself fairly around him, till she discovered the secret of his mind.

As the circle of her husband's honour had never circumscribed her pleasures, she was proof against the stings of jealousy, and instead of lengthening the tongue of reproach, thus administered the balm of comfort :

“ It

“ It is true that love is the very
 “ moon of madness, whose fatal in-
 “ fluence no mortal can resist, blasting
 “ with the mildew of sorrow the black-
 “ ening clusters of life. This venge-
 “ ful conqueror of nature sits smiling
 “ at devastation, and rejoices over the
 “ ruins of the mind. The dainties of
 “ his table are the hearts of his subjects,
 “ and his wine the salt tears of their
 “ eyes. The flowers of his garden are
 “ the burnt spots of the liver, and his
 “ walks the brown deserts of woe. His
 “ ornaments are the chains of madness,
 “ and his palace is built in the center
 “ of the region of graves. No place
 “ is sacred from his wrath, which is
 “ fatal in the house of idols, even in
 “ the house of God. The angels them-
 “ selves feel his power; joy dwells not
 “ then in paradise, it becomes like a
 “ burning sand; for all those who are
 “ afflicted

“ afflicted with love, count years for
“ hours, and lengthen days to ages.”

Thus condoling her husband in the warmth of pity, the seal of secrecy was melted on his lips, and the wine of restraint poured into the cup of explanation. When she had heard every particular with attention, she asked him, “ If he had yet fallen upon the thread
“ of direction, or traced the mysterious
“ mazes to the place of his hope.”

“ No,” replied the disconsolate husband, “ never could my hand touch
“ the skirts of her fancy, or my eyes
“ pierce the veil of her designs.”

“ O thou silly ass, that strayest in
“ the streets of folly, what then dost
“ thou intend to do?” Nothing,” replied he, “ but to make friends with
“ my misfortune.” — “ Nothing ! a
“ very virtuous resolution ; to be in
“ love,

“ love, and think of doing nothing!
 “ We shall have you go mad upon
 “ the occasion, and then we may go
 “ and live upon nothing. Come, come,
 “ this must never be; since she loves
 “ you better than I do, let me do a
 “ generous action for once. Promise
 “ me the profits of the intrigue, and I
 “ will venture to unfold the riddle.”

When this mistress of iniquity was satisfied in these points, she thus proceeded.

“ The mirror which she shewed
 “ you meant the place of beholding
 “ her beauties, and the ink was expressive of night, which is the happy
 “ time of lovers. The leaves of the
 “ chinar, which she mixed in a cup and
 “ threw before the door, implied that
 “ a pond stood by her gate shaded by
 “ these trees, and mixed by their falling

“ ing

“ ing leaves. I would therefore advise
 “ you, in day-light, to take the road of
 “ enquiry, that your night may not be
 “ darkened by disappointment.”

The happy jeweller, perceiving that the explanation seemed the true key to the door of the intrigue, set out in the morning, and after much fruitless enquiry, found at last that the riddle was explained by the superb house of the wealth of Esar.

At this discovery he was thrown into the utmost distraction, questioning thus his afflicted mind.

“ What am I that am unknown to
 “ fame, that I should dare to aspire to
 “ this golden eagle perched on the
 “ pinnacle of fortune? Shall I not roll
 “ like a ball from the cupola of pre-
 “ sumption, and be dashed on the pave-
 “ ment of ruin? Too true the inform-
 “ ed

" ed me her abode was a lofty castle,
 " to restrain my ambition, nor attempt
 " the high chariot of the sun. Ah!
 " cruel phantom of hope! thus to di-
 " rect me to the desert to quench the
 " flaming thirst of passion in the burn-
 " ing sands."

Thus exclaiming against his destiny,
 he returned by the road of despair, and
 having arrived at his hated abode, re-
 peated the particulars to his wife, who
 sat burning with curiosity.

" Well," said she, " and so you must
 " despair because she is the wife of the
 " the great and noble Esar. Do you
 " imagine, had I not suspected some-
 " thing of this kind, I had encouraged
 " you in this undertaking? O you sim-
 " pleton! Was not the immense value
 " of the topaz a sufficient conviction of
 " her wealth, and her behaviour a con-
 " vincing

“vincing proof that she had selected
 “you, from personal appearance, for
 “the purpose of unlawful pleasure? So
 “it will be entirely your own fault if
 “the thirst of desire is not quenched
 “by the wine of enjoyment. Go then,
 “in the evening, and rest at the por-
 “tal of your paradise, and be assured
 “the wicket of pleasure will be opened
 “to thy earnest desires.”

When the rosy-footed evening had
 retired through the gates of the west,
 and the Abassinian queen of night as-
 sumed her sable veil, the jeweller, ac-
 cording to his wife's directions, steered
 to the point of hope, and set himself
 down, before the gate, on a seat in the
 avenue of approach. He there re-
 mained in trepidation and anxiety, with
 his ears pricked up to the wind, and his

eyes, like two brazen nails, fixed in the door of expectation.

Here by long vigilance and excess of thought he permitted sleep, the evil genius of fools, to take possession of his intellects, and to bind him in the chains of insensibility. But the lady, transported by delusive fancy, the enchanting regions of love, spread forth her arms to embrace her lover, but in her dreams she caught the air.

Starting, she awoke disappointed, and rising from her solitary bed, threw round her a silver gauze, and like the visionary enchantress in a lover's pleasing dream, gliding slowly from walk to walk, beheld her careless lover, stretched supinely, in the cradle of slumber, rocked by the hand of ease.

Enraged at this seeming indifference, and resolved to punish his neglect, she
put

put a handful of figs and almonds in his pocket, and retired in chagrin to the gilded apartments of the haram.

When the gorgeous king who enlightens the world had exalted his golden spears upon the crimson plains of the east, the youth awoke from his unfortunate dream. He dreamed that he beheld the sun rolling round him, like a meteor, on the ground, and, disappearing in a flash of lightning, left him in utter darkness, surrounded by gabbling ghosts, and frightened by the howls of woe.

Returning, with dejection in his looks, to his own home, he knocked at the door. His wife, looking over the window, told him, "that she was
"alarmed about midnight by the cry
"of thieves. She recommended to
"him to look to his shop before he

“ came in, for that she had been just
 “ dreaming, and that her dreams were
 “ often true, that he had been robbed
 “ that night of his most precious
 “ jewel.”

“ The meer trick of imagination,”
 replied the jeweller, “ your mind be-
 “ ing affected by what you heard—
 “ Ho! ye slaves! ye slaves I say! open
 “ the door immediately. Ho! how
 “ sound ye sleep, ye slaves; the house
 “ might be a thousand times robbed
 “ for you. Ho! open the door I say.”

Having at length gained admittance,
 as he was walking up stairs, threatening
 his servants, he was assaulted by a for-
 midable tyger, which, leaping upon his
 breast, threw him headlong down, and
 running over him disappeared in the
 street, before the jeweller could recover
 from his terror. This beast of prey
 was

was no other than a neighbouring youth, whom this faithful woman had cherished all night in her bosom. He wrapped himself in a tyger's skin, and actually became the terror of the forest to the trembling jeweller.

At last, when he found time to breathe, he began to question the servants, who could hardly refrain from laughter, and was told it must certainly have been some thief, who had found means to come in, in that disguise, with intention to rob the house, and that it was well if he had not succeeded.

The amazed jeweller swallowed the deceit, and having examined his trunks and coffers, ran to his chaste wife, and embracing her, related the particulars, and thanked God for their happy deliverance from the bloody hands of a ruf-
sian. But when the transports of con-
gratulation

gratulation were over, his artful wife perceived, by the dustiness of his looks, that his hand had not plucked the flower of enjoyment, nor his nostrils been gratified with the odors of love. With a sorrow-soothing tongue she began to charm the ear of affliction, and with the hand of well dissembled affection, to wipe the dust of obscuring melancholy from the face of his disappointment, asking him, "What the night had disclosed from under the veil of secrecy."

"Vexation," replied he, "the bride of imagination was pregnant with nothing but deceit."

"Love must expect disappointment," said she; "go and change your apparel; the next night may be governed by your better stars."

As the jeweller was changing his cloaths, some of the fruit dropping by acci-

accident upon the floor ; “ Ha ! ” said his wife, “ Where did you get this “ fruit ? ” By Mahomet I know not,” replied he.

The sharp-witted woman struck the eye of imagination upon the shadow of truth, and soon caught the substance. “ My life against a straw,” said she, “ you have been asleep last night ; ha, “ heavy-head—When will your drowsy “ eyes be open to your fortune ? Glad “ am I she has given you nuts to crack, “ and put figs in your pocket, to tell “ you that you are but a boy in love, “ and that sweetmeats were a more proper amusement.”

When the old prostituted matron, night, wrapped up in her sable mantle, with silent foot crept forth, whispering the glad hour of appointment in the impatient ears of lovers, the jeweller

with fluttering heart, stole trembling to his former place, throbbing with desire and expectation. At length, about the silent hour of midnight, the gales of joy began to blow over the flowers of his fortune, and to exhilarate his intoxicated brain with the volatile essence of hope: for now the cautious hand of love was seen to open the gate of paradise, and the divine huri to advance like a peacock in the season of love, or rather like a golden-winged cuckunufs*, feeding upon the flames of desire.

When he was falling on his knees to worship her, she, trembling, caught his trembling hand, and whispering in his ear, to drop all impertinent ceremony,

* A bird, otherwise called the atushzin or fire striker, which they say he performs in the season of love by the friction of his bill.

conducted him silently into the silken apartments of pleasure.

Here silver-handed damsels poured forth the rosy wine into the golden cups of festivity, and the tower of harmony * was commanded to strike the melodious instruments of joy. When the curtains of privacy dropped down, and pleasure retired to the heart, the lightning of mutual desire began to sparkle alternately from their eyes, and to glow on their burning cheeks. Now he beheld her fair breasts, as a pilgrim beholds the fair cupolas of the temple of Mecca, and drank the water of life from her rosy lips, as he drinks of the water of Zimzim †. But as the storm of passion

* Called a Nobit Chana, being a mark of distinction to great men, who are permitted a band of music over their gate.

† A sacred fountain near Mecca.

increased,

increased, the waves of impatience began to roll, till overwhelmed in the ocean of love, they sunk in each other's arms.

While these lovers, ambitious of the race, sprung like arrows from the bow of the hunter, or like wrestlers in the amphitheatre, lay entwined in each other's arms, Fortune, who loves to sport with human fate, brought the watch to the door, which in the flutter and hurry of impatience they negligently forgot to secure.

The cutwal, observing the door wide open at this unseasonable and dangerous hour, and the porters snoring on the pillows of negligence, imagined the house must have been robbed; and pressing forward, with his guard, from apartment to apartment, stumbled at last into the chamber of love.

Start-

Starting back with amazement and shame, he was for some time hesitating how to act upon this desperate occasion. But as the affair was known to his guard, he could not smother it with the ashes of secrecy ; assured, if the flame should afterwards transpire, he must die with the honour of Esar. He therefore ordered his men to retire, and he advanced to the trembling jeweller, and with a voice full of wrath thus accosted him :

“ Wretch ! forgotten of God, by
 “ whose infernal instigation hast thou
 “ kindled this unquenchable flame to
 “ consume this illustrious house, and
 “ bury thyself in the ruins of its honour ?”

The jeweller made no reply, for despair sat quivering upon his lips, and terror glared in his haggard eye.
 Though

Though the flush of shame broke forth on the lady's cheeks, she preserved more fortitude and presence of mind, and pulling a purse from the pillow, tendered it to the cutwal, saying,

“ For the sake of God have pity
 “ upon the frailties of a woman, and
 “ let the wages of years atone for an
 “ hour's indiscretion. Ah! let not
 “ your humanity permit you to ruin a
 “ poor servant, who lives but by the
 “ smiles of the fair queen of chastity ;
 “ who would certainly wash the stain
 “ of incontinence from her sacred floor
 “ with the blood of the unfortunate
 “ delinquents.”

The cutwal grew pale with astonishment at a speech so contrary to his imagination, and as his eyes had never been honoured with a sight of the veil of her beauties, he retracted his former
 sup-

supposition, and blessed himself that nothing had passed his tongue, by mistaking a servant of the Haram for a lady of such high reputation.

In the mean time the handmaid, whose evil counsel had directed her mistress to the brink of this dangerous precipice, having heard the words of the lady, entered into the spirit of the plot, and pretending to be disturbed by the noise, came in to the apartment with a long train of slaves in veils, and personating her mistress, began to inquire into the cause of this riot, and of the cutwal's impertinent intrusion, ordering her guards to be immediately alarmed, to commit him to a place of chastisement.

During this tumultuous scene, while the terrified and amazed cutwal was repeating his story, and protesting his intended integrity, the lady took the
 oppor-

opportunity of slipping, undiscovered, under the veil of one of her slaves, who immediately sat down in her place, and took upon her the whole accusation.

When the pretended lady had been informed of the circumstances by the cutwal, she commanded the vile slave, who dared to defile her threshold with the foot of incontinence, to be carried to prison with her gallant, till the sentence of her pleasure should be further signified.

The cutwal, who was standing in a supplicating posture, with his closed palms held up to his forehead, on receiving this favourable order, fell prostrate upon the floor before her, and begged his care for the preservation of her noble house might not be deemed the effect of presumption, but of duty, and no ways misconstrued to his disadvantage.

She

She told him his behaviour was wholly excusable, and consistent with honesty of intention ; and as a proof of her forgiveness, she ordered him to be presented with a shawl *, which he accepted, with a thousand protestations of the honour which she conferred upon him ; carrying off the female slave and the young jeweller, who was all astonishment at what he beheld, imagining that he actually had been duped by a servant. For such was his terror that he perceived not the trick, and could not now believe the testimony of his eyes, which discovered such great disparity.

Now day, the keen enemy of thieves, owls, savages, and the children of riot, wide opening his bright eye, glanced horizontally over the surface of things,

* A robe of Camel hair, or fine Cashmirian wool, very valuable.

and

and the hum of the city hive began to swell upon the ear, the breeze of industry to blow, and the sea of business to be gently agitated. Wonder, with silent stare, beheld them as they passed along, and curiosity, whispering to her sister calumny, tittered at their misfortune.

The jeweller meeting an old acquaintance in the street, told him to run to his house and dash a potsherd to pieces against the lintels. His friend, without enquiring the reason, did as he was told, and the jeweller's wife, hearing the noise, looked over the window, and penetrating into the meaning, prepared to extricate her husband from his difficulties.

Taking a casket of jewels and female ornaments under her veil, she called her dooly, and hastened to the
 5 palace

palace of Esar, where she was admitted without ceremony into the Haram. She presented her commodities for sale, and among the rest the topaz, which her husband had received, telling the lady it was not to be disposed of, but that she could entertain her with a curious story relative to the person to whom it belonged. The lady blushed, and desired she might hear it; at the same time giving the sign of dismissal to her servants. She found by every particular of the story that this woman was the wife of the jeweller, and privy to the whole intrigue.

The lady, who had determined before to let the jeweller and the faithful slave fall victims to worldly reproach, perceiving herself in the power of this artful woman, related the whole affair; adding that as the jeweller and her slave

were both married persons, the law would condemn them to death; which she would willingly prevent if possible; nay further, that she had just heard the king, on account of the reproach cast on so noble a house, had commanded their immediate execution *.

The jeweller's wife asked, what was the colour of the slave's veil? and being told it was white, she desired she might immediately have the fellow of it. She threw her own blue veil over it, and told the lady she was going to the prison in the character of one of her attendants, with a message to the slave, and would endeavour to extricate them both from their misfortune, without staining her fair reputation.

Accordingly being admitted by the gaoler, with a message from the wife of

* Adultery is punished with death in almost all the kingdoms of Asia.

Esar, she let fly a pigeon from her bosom; and while the gaoler was gaping around she threw her veil over the slave; who retired without suspicion, and ran joyfully home to her mistress.

In a few hours the doors of the prison were heard to groan on their iron hinges, and the stern executioners, with their axes shouldered, attended by guards with gleaming sabres, appeared. The jeweller and his wife were dragged to the place of execution, and mounted upon a lofty scaffold, before ten thousand spectators.

No sooner had the jeweller's wife looked around, than she began to exclaim against the king, and the injustice of the times, when a man could not enjoy his own wife, without suffering an infamous death. At this speech a loud murmur was heard; sticks and

turbans flew thick in the air, and justice, justice, resounded from all sides.

The officers now beckoned to silence, repeating the particulars of their crime, and reading aloud the royal mandate; but as many credible witnesses advanced, and swore to the identity of the persons as husband and wife, the execution was thought proper to be suspended, and they were carried to the royal tribunal. There the jeweller's wife, being first called to examination, fixed her eyes upon the ground, put her fingers in her ears, and remained silent.

The king, astonished at this behaviour, demanded the reason; to which at last she condescended to answer in these words.

“ Most high and mighty king; let
 “ your most loyal, though meanest,
 “ slave perish, without daring to behold
 “ you,

“ you, lest she be called at the day of
 “ judgment to witness against your in-
 “ justice. Be not therefore deceived
 “ by appearances, nor condemn by pre-
 “ sumptive proofs. The person with
 “ whom I am accused of adultery is
 “ my own husband; and can a man
 “ commit adultery with his own wife?
 “ My sister being a servant in the house
 “ of Esar, she invited us to a private
 “ supper, where imprudently we made
 “ so free with the wine as to occasion
 “ the indecent behaviour for which we
 “ are now condemned; but God shall
 “ judge his people, and the innocent
 “ shall receive their reward.”

The king was astonished at her audacity, as well as the whole court; but her defence appearing satisfactory, they were ordered to make concessions to the noble lady; and being discharged

from the indictment, all parties were satisfied, and the honour of an illustrious house preserved from impending ruin.

This, O sublime and magnanimous prince, is a faint shadow of female cunning and incontinence: therefore to doat on their charms is to doat on our own misfortunes; and to be tempted by the fairness of the fruit, is to swallow a death of our own chusing. If woman once fixes her mind upon any action, her cunning supplies the means, though deemed by men beyond the reach of possibility. She is harder to be confined than liquid silver; and if permitted freedom, she is more free than the wind. Her desire admits no cure but gratification; and neither walls nor guards avail to secure her chastity.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

The Story of the Fourth Companion.

IN the fair city of Benaris, sacred to the gods of the Hindoos, there once lived a young Brahmin, the book of whose mind was clear of the sentences of wisdom, and his sleeve quite destitute of art. But his wife was a prodigy of cunning, and exalted the spear of the tongue above the most spirited warriors of her sex, so that she ruled, an unrivaled queen, in the empire of female wit. Nor had nature been sparing in finishing her beauties; but in the list of

her accomplishments, that of chastity was unluckily forgot.

As her foolish husband, who was immoveable as his threshold, was a stumbling block in the way of intrigue, she was determined to change this domestic goose to a goose of passage; for which purpose, from her fertile brain, she drew forth this extraordinary expedient.

One night as the simple Brahmin wished to embrace the chaste partner of his bed, she peevishly withdrew from his arms; and the more fond he seemed, the more she expressed her aversion. The poor husband, like a foundered horse, fell in the ditch of disappointment; but still he hobbled, though with slackened reins; and he would perhaps have reached the end of his journey, had not an unlucky blow in the

the eye settled him on the dust of misfortune.

Swearing by Ram ^b, and all the gods of his catalogue, he was rising to revenge the indignity on poor Marana, had she not leaped out of bed, and begun to implore his mercy. The cause of this behaviour the Brahmin inquired, and his virtuous spouse made this reply :

“ How can I be otherwise than an-
 “ gry, when we have become so ridi-
 “ culous to the world, and so con-
 “ temptible to the circle of our friends ?
 “ wounded in our honour by the lances
 “ of reproach, and a mere but to the
 “ blunt raillery of fools. Can I sit to
 “ hear my husband traduced, nor con-
 “ sider his reputation as my own ? It
 “ was but this very night that the wife

^b One of the Hindoo gods.

“ of

“ of Kissen the banker had the impudence to tell me—but oh! I can never repeat it.”

“ Out with it,” said the Brahmin: “ What can she say of me ?

“ Well, since it is my duty to obey you in all things, though sometimes I would rather be excused, I must tell you she shewed me a picture, wherein a great rough ass was represented, with Sirfitti, the goddess of wit, upon his back, and endeavouring to whip him into a gallop !”

“ Well, and what of all that,” said the Brahmin? — “ Nothing,” replied Marana, “ if you like it; but she told me further, that the ass was intended for you; and ridiculed your ignorance so much, that I am ashamed to shew my face in company. But I was so much provoked at this usage, that
“ I have

“I have sworn we shall never cohabit, till you learn, like other Brahmins, the mysteries of the sacred bedes^c.”

The poor Brahmin, having a violent passion for his wife, and finding it in vain to resist her humour, determined to learn the bedes; and accordingly next morning having bound up the loins of resolution, he set out on a pilgrimage to Jagganat, visiting every residence of science and mobed^d of high fame. Prompted by the hopes of a speedy return, he soon sharpened the bluntness of his intellects on the grindstone of knowledge, engraving the four bedes on the table of his retentive mind. At

^c The four great mysteries of the Hindoo religion, only revealed to the Brahmins.

^d A teacher of science.

last he turned his face to his own abode, and he rushed homeward with redoubled speed, like a hungry horse anticipating the pleasures of his provender.

When he arrived at his own house, his beloved wife ran frantic to his arms. Though his soul was dissolving with love, he blushed at his own incapacity in returning such tokens of affection.

Unfortunately Marana's gallant had that very evening prepared an entertainment, and waited her bright appearance with all the anxiety of expecting love; but he was informed, by one of her servants, that her husband had arrived in town.

Stung with disappointment at this accident, he sent her word by the messenger, that he had regulated the scenes of pleasure with the nice hand of affection; that they now only waited to be
enlight-

enlightened by her fair presence ; therefore not to permit the rubab * to mourn her sad absence, or the ching to affect his ears with the long-drawn notes of woe. Let not the sparkling wine die in the cups of joy, the perfume fly off from the curtains of pleasure, nor the incense from the altar of love.

At this message the soft-hearted Marana put the finger of indication upon the eye of consent ; and rummaging her packet of devices, thus addressed her beloved husband :

“ Thanks to all the gods and goddesses for your return to my arms in safety, since now the fatigues of travel will be forgot on the pillows of ease, and this interval of tedious absence prove the nuptials of our fu-

* A musical instrument.

“ ture

“ ture blifs. Now fhall I triumph in
 “ turn over thefe vain creatures who
 “ occafioned this long feparation, as
 “ you now muft be accomplished in all
 “ the five bedes.”

“ There are only four bedes in all,”
 faid the Brahmin.

“ Four bedes! good heavens! are
 “ there not the rug bede, the feame
 “ bede, the judger bede, the attarbah
 “ bede, and the tiria bede^f?”

“ Tiria bede! you are dreaming, my
 “ dear: who ever heard of the tiria
 “ bede?”

“ Not the tiria bede! the important
 “ myftery of women?”

“ By Krifhna, I believe the women
 “ are all myfteries: though the im-

^f The fcience or myftery of women.

“ mortal

“ mortal Brimha, god of wisdom, never
“ heard of more than four bedes.

“ Oh! Bishen! Bishen! we are ruined
“ for ever.”

“ Ruined! for what?”

“ Away with your tiria bede! By
“ heavens, I had rather live with a she
“ bear, than be thus tormented with the
“ freaks of a distracted woman.”

“ Ruined! we are ruined for ever.
“ The banker’s wife, disputing your
“ capacity one day, offered to wager
“ twenty thousand rupees that you
“ could never learn the tiria bede.
“ How could I refuse the challenge?
“ In short the wager was laid—so what
“ will become of us? You know this
“ is the bulk of our fortune; and as
“ the money is deposited in the hands
“ of a shroff, the moment she hears of
“ your return, if you cannot give sa-

“ tisfactory answers to the pundit*,
 “ who will be sent to examine you, the
 “ wager is lost without redemption;
 “ and we are ruined, as I said, for ever.”
 “ This comes of having a proud wife.
 “ A curse upon such foolish pride ! a
 “ wit too ! was this a wise trick ? Ram,
 “ Ram ! I shall certainly run mad. They
 “ may call me a fool and an ass ; but I
 “ never was so great a fool as to throw
 “ twenty thousand rupees into the sea,
 “ where I might as well hope to find
 “ them again as to find this tiria bedē.
 “ However, I will set out in the morn-
 “ ing towards Jagganat undiscovered ;
 “ and if there is any such thing as the
 “ tiria bedē, I doubt not my capacity
 “ to acquire it. In the mean time I
 “ will enjoy, for one night, the fruits
 “ of my long expectations.”

* An instructor or doctor of science.

“ Ah! my dear husband! You have
“ entirely forgot my oath.”

“ Arm me with patience, good hea-
“ ven!—I have no business here!”

With that the foolish Brahmin flung himself out of the door, muttering a string of curses upon her head, till he had reached a sacred grove without the city, where he threw himself down before the Pagod, rolling on the dust of affliction, and vowing never to see her more.—But when the first transports of his rage were over, he found himself hooked like a fish, which struggled in vain for freedom. He therefore advanced the foot of resolution on the road of a foolish design. He set out with unwearied diligence to search for the tiria bede.

One day, as he was passing through a certain city, he saw six women laugh-

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ing together at the door of a public bath: he stopped to observe them; and one of them struck with the oddity of his appearance, asked him, smiling, " what he was looking for?"

" For something I cannot find," said the Brahmin.

" That must certainly be your wits," replied she; " for by your behaviour you seem to have lost them."

" No, no," said he, shaking his head significantly " though I probably may soon, if I find not the tiria bede."

At this the merry wenches set up a loud laugh; and having heard the Brahmin's story, they saw clearly into the artifice of his wife. They consulted among themselves, and told the Brahmin, if he would comply with all their proposals, they would instruct him in the tiria bede. The Brahmin consent-

ing

ing with pleasure, they threw lots about lecturing him by turns, and made an appointment every morning at the bath to communicate the success of their instructions.

C H A P. XI.

The First Lesson.

JEMMAL, whose fortune it was to have drawn the first lot, having shewn her house to the Brahmin, desired him to call at a certain hour, in the character of her cousin from the country. The Brahmin was punctual to his hour. She took him in the embraces of friendship, and having introduced him to her unsuspecting husband, he received him with equal warmth, and treated him with foods and sherbets, according to the custom of hospitality.

When

When supper was over, Jemmal took the candle in her hand, and telling her husband that she had some family matters to chat over with her cousin, she conducted the Bramin into a chamber; and setting herself down beside him on the bed, threw one leg over his knee, and one arm round his neck. She then wantonly smiling in his face, told him, " Now, my dear Brahmin, this is the
 " happy time to take a short lesson of
 " the tiria bede."

The silly Brahmin, unacquainted with this kind of learning, threw down his eyes to the ground, covering his foolish face with the crimson veil of shame. But the lady more experienced in her art, threw open her bosom, panting like two musk fawns that sport on the plains of Bochara, half bared her thigh, that rose to the view like a crescent

from the rosy skirts of the evening. She slowly rolled her sparkling eyes, liquid as the dews of the morning, and tapped him with the hand of dalliance, and said,

“ I perceive, young man, that you
“ are likely to prove a very dull scho-
“ lar—Come, this will never do; the
“ book of pleasure lies open before
“ you; let us run over the first lesson.”

“ Oh! heaven!” said the Brahmin;
“ did you not this very moment call
“ me cousin before your husband,
“ and now you would have me
“ forget the sacred laws of Brimh^h
“ and hospitality, by committing so
“ heinous a crime?”

“ Fool!” said the lady, “unexperien-
“ ed in the ways of the world! must the
“ river of pleasure run to waste, and

^h The hindoo name for the Supreme Being.

“ but

“ but one traveller have the benefit of
 “ the stream? No, the thirsty shall
 “ quaff my benevolence, and the tem-
 “ perate shall know my revenge.” Then
 starting from him with a look of dis-
 dain, she began to scream out, A rape!
 a rape!

The poor Brahmin, upon hearing this, almost sunk through the earth with terror. The husband and the whole family came crowding into the apartment. Here they found the young Brahmin wallowing distractedly upon the ground, with Jemmal holding up his head, and loudly calling out for water; for that, alas! her poor cousin had fall into a fit to which he was sometimes subject.

One threw a bowl of cold water in his face; another began to open his jaws to pour spirits down his throat;

Q 4

a third

a third placed a burning candle under his nose, which made him roar aloud; but the more he expressed his rage, the more they pitied his misfortune, and pestered him with their remedies. He at length found it the most adviseable method to compose himself; Jemmal begged them to retire, lest the tumult might be prejudicial to his unsettled state.

When they were all gone, she began to laugh at her own artifice. She seized the Brahmin by the hand, and asked him how his pulse beat? The Brahmin, gasping for breath, began to upbraid her with her cruel usage. He confessed that he had never been so frightened in the course of his life, and wished he was fairly out again.

“Not so fast,” said Jemmal; “naughty boys must not only be frightened,
“ but

“ but beat when obstinate to instruc-
 “ tion; you certainly have forgot that
 “ you have not yet repeated your les-
 “ son.”—When the Brahmin perceived
 into what a vixen’s hands he had fallen,
 and that, in case of a refusal, her next
 scheme would be to get him a sound
 drubbing, he began aukwardly to toy
 with this wanton daughter of wiles.—
 To what shall we compare the Brahmin
 in this season of distress? — He was like
 a thirsty traveller in a sultry-day, when
 a fair valley opens before him, in which
 there is a beauteous fountain of water.
 ——— “ Well done,” said his artful
 instructress; “ the oftener you repeat
 “ your lesson the better. But remem-
 “ ber, O young man, that this is the
 “ first lesson of the tiria bede.”

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

The Second Lesson.

THE next morning, according to appointment, they all met at the bath; and having diverted themselves with the story of Jemmal, Zohara, the next lady, called the Brahmin aside. He having once tasted the wine of pleasure, began ardently to thirst for more; and being informed of the plot she had been hatching, he entered into the spirit of the intrigue.

This mistress in iniquity, as she sported with her husband that morning, insisted upon his playing her a tune upon the Ragnei¹, in which science he was

¹ An amusement similar to the Jews-harp.

no small proficient. While the poor man was diverting her with this music, instead of better, she began to tickle him violently; but not being in a skittish humour at that time, he continued his tune, making a few wry faces.

“ Well,” says Zohara, at last, “ I believe I shall win my wager.”

“ What wager?” says the husband, taking his instrument solemnly from his mouth.

“ A very ridiculous one, my dear husband,” replied she; “ but indeed you must win it for me. Last night, you must know, we were all merry in the merchant’s house, and began to tickle one another. I happened to say, that I never knew a person in my life so little subject to be tickled as my husband; for that I really believe you could play a whole cantata

“ on the Ragnei, with your eyes shut,
 “ without either opening them, or stir-
 “ ring from the place; though I, in
 “ the mean time, should tickle you
 “ with all my might.

“ She said it was absolutely impos-
 “ sible, and that she would stake her
 “ best milch cow against mine that
 “ you could not.—As I had formerly
 “ experienced your insensibility in that
 “ way, I foolishly took up the bet,
 “ promising to decide it this evening
 “ in the garden, where she is to be
 “ present, if my husband shall consent
 “ she should attend for that purpose.”

“ You are always so full of nonsense
 “ and whim, Zohara, do you think I
 “ can encourage such folly? Though
 “ this business is not so difficult, we
 “ shall be laughed at by the whole
 “ town.”

.She

“ She will be laughed at, my dear husband, and not we, for sporting away a
 “ a cow, for a single tune on a Ragnei.”

The foolish husband having consented at last to gratify the humour of his wife, they went to the place of appointment; and being met by the merchant's wife, who was one of the society of pleasure, he laid himself down on the grass, fastened the instrument in his jaw, and shutting both his eyes, hard as a miser's purse, he began to brush the right side of his beard with his fore-finger, and to twist his mouth like a flounder.

In the mean time Zohara laid her head upon his side, and stretching herself, turned her hands over her head, and began to tickle him in the most sensible parts, crying, “ Take care, my
 “ dear, and keep close your eyes, or I
 “ must certainly lose my milk.”

The young Brahmin, from behind a hedge, observed the signal, and resolved to have his share of the sport. He leapt out, and danced a jig to the husband's tune, whose risible faculty stood unmoved, though he grinned now-and-then at a rough touch, like a sleeping cur by the fire-side; yet, in other respects, he minded her tickling no more than another bolster.

The merchant's wife, as if she had been tickled herself, fell down in a fit of laughter; and before the husband had finished his cantata, the active Brahmin had finished his dance, and scampered to his place of retirement.

The prince was observed to be very attentive to these stories, and now-and-then, a faint smile was seen to dawn on his clouded brow; this encouraged the facetious narrator to continue his humourous tale.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

The Third Lesson.

THE trick of Zohara next morning occasioned no small merriment at the bath, and great odds were laid against Mashuka, the next performer. She called the Brahmin aside, and communicated her plot; and they prepared to put it immediately in execution.

This lady had no sooner got home, than she pretended a fit of madness. She tore off her cloaths, gnashed her teeth, broke down the furniture, and, in short, began to exhibit every sign of a raging and convulsed demoniac.

The

The weeping family were thrown into distraction, and the officious husband had half his teeth beat out, in endeavouring to restrain her fury. The neighbourhood was all alarmed, physicians hastened from all quarters; among the rest, an uncommon conjurer was recommended by one of the sisterhood, who being immediately sent for by the husband, our Brahmin appeared in disguise, trembling upon a staff, with a long white beard to his girdle, like a sage loaded with wisdom and with years.

The physicians began to sneer with contempt, and to ridicule the powers of conjuration, but the Brahmin only smiled at their ignorance; which the husband observing, and being endued with more faith, he told him, “ for
 “ heaven’s sake, worthy father, if you
 “ can

“ can administer comfort to my poor
 “ wife, do it in the name of Brimha,
 “ and mind not what they say.”

The Brahmin replied, “ If you are
 “ desirous I should relieve your wife,
 “ you must discharge these doctors,
 “ who, knowing nothing of her com-
 “ plaint themselves, imagine others are
 “ equally ignorant.” Accordingly, the
 doctors were all excluded, when the
 conjurer called for a frying-pan, and,
 taking seven painted eggs from his
 pocket, pretending to read the charac-
 ters, he broke them into the pan: He
 called then for a black-boned hen ⁱ, and
 having sacrificed her to Mahadeo ^k, he
 put in three drops of her blood, and
 nine of her gall, to which he added,

ⁱ Such are common in India.

^k The great spirit, one of the Hindoo
 dieties.

seven black drops from a phial, then stirring the composition over the fire he began to mutter incantations.

When this infernal pancake began to fry, the devil, in a hoarse voice, from the mouth of the lady, was heard to exclaim, "I burn! I burn!" The family upon this began to run out of the room, all except the afflicted husband, who, trembling, expected the devil in a flame of fire

In the mean time, the conjurer, with an imperious voice, cried out, "Depart! depart! thou wicked spirit, depart! or, by all the mysterious powers of my art, thou shalt instantly be fried to fritters."

Upon this solemn invocation, the devil shook the unfortunate woman, crying, "Spare me! spare me! and I will unfold to you the secret of my expulsion."

The

The conjurer immediately took off the pan, and the devil proceeded thus.

“ My name is Indrari, prince of
 “ the Deints ¹, and ten thousand le-
 “ gions obey my command; nor was
 “ I ever, till now, compelled to yield
 “ to the power of an exorcist; but
 “ now I am forced to reveal to hu-
 “ man ears the dark secrets of the in-
 “ visible powers.

“ Let the lady be adorned in her wed-
 “ ding garments, and perfumed with the
 “ essence of flowers. Let her be placed
 “ in a close litter, with her husband on
 “ her right side, and you on her left; I
 “ will then present thee with a phial con-
 “ taining the balsam of life, which you
 “ must give her to drink by degrees, as
 “ she is carried around the temple of

¹ The name given to devils by the Hindoos.

“ Camdeo^m three times on the shoulders
 “ of those who love her best; let them
 “ at the same time say aloud,

“ Dunnus Indrari danaba, offura
 “ doitah.

“ Sigre Jouatta Gundirba Basdebo
 “ Biddottahⁿ.”

The trembling husband listened with astonishment, and immediately prepared all things according to the devil's desire. When they were all three shut up in the litter, the lady's friends raised them on their shoulders, and began to walk round the temple, bawling out as the devil had commanded.

The husband being inquisitive about the balsam, the conjurer told him, he had got it already in his hand to administer.

^m The spirit of love.

ⁿ This verse is an invocation of spirits in the Shanscrit language.

In

In a short time, the lady began to shake violently, and the poor man exclaimed ; “ Good gods ! what a fierce “ devil has got into her ! Ah ! poor “ woman, I wish he was fairly out ! ” But unfortunately the devil was an obstinate one, disdaining to be laid so easily. He began to agitate the poor patient more and more, till, in the moment she swallowed the balsam, she was taken with a raging fit, she seized her husband’s ear between her teeth : he began to roar out, that the devil would certainly devour him.

When the first fit was over, the conjurer began to ask her questions ; but finding the devil was again in motion, he told the husband, that he verily believed the cunning demon had cheated them, for that he was not yet likely

to abandon her. He moreover said, that as these evil spirits delighted in lying and ambiguity, he had been reflecting on what he had told, and remembered one particular, which was, that she must be carried about by those who loved her best; — now, as that could only be supposed to be her husband, he imagined, that part of the ceremony was still wanting.

The husband saw into the propriety of what he said, and accordingly leaping out of the litter, bent his neck to the yoke, while the happy exorcist, at his own ease, laid this outrageous spirit of madness with the potent balsam of life, and imagined himself no small proficient in the mysteries of the tiria bede.

The lady waking, as from a dream, expressed the greatest astonishment at what she beheld, asking, who that old
fellow

fellow was, and how she came to be dressed in her nuptial robes? When she was satisfied in these particulars, she professed the greatest acknowledgments to the exorcist, and obliged her husband to make him a handsome present for his salutary balsam.

The story being related next morning at the bath, she was allowed to have exceeded the other two; and the remaining ladies began almost to despair of the victory, but their inventions being sharp, they soon devised plots of deceit. Simabi, the next on the list, having imparted her scheme to the Brahmin, began to prepare for the field.

C H A P. XIV.

The Fourth Lesson.

WHEN dinner was over Simabi, with contracted brows and wry faces, began to complain of a violent cholic, bending her body forward, and pressing the afflicted part. The poor husband was in the utmost affliction. His dear wife began to roar out with her pain. — The women in the neighbourhood were alarmed. They hastened to the house, and proposed a thousand cures, to all of which she found some objection or other. But one of the sisterhood, who was in the secret, told her,
there

there was an old Fakeer in town, who had a very extraordinary method of relieving all pains of that kind, which never failed of success, and that she herself had experienced its effects. The husband immediately proposed to send for him, to which, at length, the patient, after much persuasion, consented.

Accordingly, this lady, who pretended to know his lodgings, sent a private messenger to the Brahmin, who, in the disguise of an old Fakeer, tottering on the brink of the grave, accompanied him to the house of affliction.

“Welcome, good father!” said the husband: “I am told you have an infallible remedy for the gripes, and my poor wife there, being in great distress, I have sent for you to administer comfort.”

“Let

“ Let the room be cleared,” said the Brahmin, “ for I never exhibit in public; but you must of necessity remain.”

The company having left the apartment, the doctor began to examine his patient, and, with a significant shake of his head, most emphatically pronounced her in danger. The poor husband thought death already knocked at the door, and began to intreat the physician to proceed in the way of application.

“ I have a very extraordinary secret, for the cure of this disorder,” said the Brahmin gravely; “ but possibly it will not be so agreeable to you; for the pain must be transferred from the belly of your wife to yours: but it is adviseable, to admit a second person to a participation of the pain, which

“ which will render it more supportable,
“ being divided between two.”

“ There is no pain on earth, but I
“ would suffer,” replied the husband,
“ rather than the pain of seeing my
“ dear wife in such torments.”--“ Well,”
said the Brahmin, “ here is a phial of
“ surprising and infallible efficacy.
“ Drink it off, rub your own belly
“ against the parts affected in your
“ wife, and the pain by the friction
“ will be transferred from her to
“ you.”

The husband grasped the phial, drank
it greedily off, and set to work, as
the doctor advised. The strong dose,
which he had foolishly swallowed, began
presently to work in his own bowels,
and to set his inwards at variance, so
that he rejoiced at its surprising virtue.
While this intestine war was carrying
on

on with increasing rage, he began to ask his wife, "if she yet felt any relief."

"O yes, my dear," replied she, "a little more, a little more, for the sake of Brimh."

Endeavouring to conceal his pain, he redoubled his efforts. At length, unable to retain patience, he brayed like a foolish ass, and kicking awhile round the room, threw himself sprawling upon the floor. He swore that her pain must be all gone, for that his bowels were torn to pieces.

The patient, who could hardly refrain from laughter, continued however to complain. The doctor, taking out another phial, offered it to the husband to drink, who swore he would drink no more: "Fy! fy!" said the Brahmin, "we must not thus leave our cure unfinished; for if the operation
" is

“ is not completely performed, I shall
 “ lose both my medicine and reputation.”

“ Performed !” exclaims the husband, — “ perform the rest yourself ;
 “ for, by Krishna, I have had my share.”

The Brahmin, having thus obtained permission, put the phial to his mouth, and drank a hearty cordial, which helped him to perform the cure to the no small satisfaction of the husband, who rewarded him handsomely for his trouble, and trumpeted his fame through the streets.

When the story was related next morning, it was thought impossible to outdo Simabi. But Mabooba was determined to try her genius, and to give some further instruction to the Brahmin, in the mystery of the tiria bede.

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

The Fifth Lesson.

MA B O O B A, in the evening, laying hold of her husband by the arm, said, "Come, my dear, let us walk into the garden." As this loving couple went hand-in-hand, they advanced to a fair tree, loaded with almonds; when Mabooba beheld them, she gave way to the longing of desire, entreating her husband to bend his back, for that she was resolved to pluck them with her own hands. The husband, having remonstrated awhile against it, was constrained to give way to her humour; he bent his back to the

the precious burthen, she scrambled like a monkey into the tree, and began to devour the fruit. But before she had gratified her palate she turned down her eyes, and thus addressed her astonished husband.

“Ha! base fornicator! what are you doing with that harlot?”

“Harlot!—The woman is mad,” replied the husband, looking round; “by heaven there is not a living soul near me!”

“Ha! wretch! do you think to deceive my eyes? Is it not sufficient that I wink at your private intrigues, without making me the eye-witness of my own dishonour? This is impudence surpassing belief; but my nails are yet left to tear out the strumpet’s eyes.”

With that she hastened down the tree,
and,

and, saluting her husband with a blow on the ear, exclaimed against the injury he had done her.

The husband seizing her hands, imagined she was certainly mad, protesting his own innocence; but when her fury was a little abated, this reverend doctor, for he was a learned Brahmin, began by degrees to change his opinion, and to form an hypothesis concerning this strange deception; reasoning to this effect:

“ I have often, my dear, doubted
 “ the truth of the Bedant ° phi-
 “ losophy, which teaches that no-
 “ thing is real, but now I am fully
 “ convinced.—Yes, we ourselves, and
 “ all that we behold around us, are
 “ nothing but mere delusions.—No,

° A book among the Hindoos, which teaches this philosophy.

“ nothing

“ nothing but the creatures of imagination, which amuse the mind with shadows, and stamp them with the semblance of truth.”

After many learned arguments were advanced, in favour of this doctrine, Mabooba became a convert, and sealed her forgiveness with a kiss. In the mean time she recollected her almonds, and begged of him to mount the tree, for that her longing was yet very violent.

The philosopher immediately complied, and while he was busy in pulling the fruit, the young Brahmin leaped from behind a hedge. He seized upon the innocent Mabooba, like a ravenous kite that darts upon and takes possession of a nest that trembles on high between two taper branches of a cypress.

The husband perceiving the robbery, began to load Mabooba with names of reproach, to which she only replied in his own words—"Nothing is real, my dear; " all that we behold around us are " nothing but vain delusions, nothing " but the creatures of imagination, " which amuse the mind with shadows, " and stamp them with the semblance of " truth. Why should you therefore " be in a passion, seeing this is but a " world of delusion? or who knows but " that may be an enchanted tree?"

The philosopher, something dubious of his own doctrine, leaped down and broke his leg; but the Brahmin had finished his job, and left the lady to convince her husband of her virtue by the power of his own arguments. It was, however, observed, that he was never
after

after a stickler for the visionary philosophy of the Bedant.

The prince laughing heartily at this trick, broke the seal, like new wine, from his lips, and swore that the invention of no woman could ever surpass that of Simabi.—The companions overjoyed at these symptoms, intreated the narrator to proceed, and he complied with great pleasure.

C H A P. XVI.

Sixth Lesson.

SHERIRE, the sixth and last of this chaste and ingenious society, complained of a violent head-ach, languor, and lassitude of mind. She intimated to her husband, that want of exercise was certainly the source of her disorder. The physician being consulted on the occasion, ascribed it to the same cause, and the want of company to keep her in spirits.

Many kinds of exercise were proposed, but that which she seemed most inclinable to was the swing, which is commonly

commonly prescribed in the Zennanas, for the security of domestic happiness. A swing was accordingly prepared in the garden, and some female comedians were hired, to dissipate the vapours of melancholy. But when the comedians appeared, they proved to be her five intriguing companions, and the Brahmin, close shaved, made the sixth.

When Sherire and Simabi got into the swing, and the husband stood pushing them on; in a moment Simabi, by a touch of her dress, appeared in a masculine habit.

The husband, kindling with rage, pulled her from the swing, and prepared to make her the victim of his jealousy. The whole company burst out in a fit of laughter; and Sherire cried out, "Don't be rash, my dear; this

"is nothing but one of her tricks to

“divert us; patience, you will find her a
 “woman, and see her soon return to her
 “proper likeness.” Accordingly, this
 fair enchantress, by a touch of her artful
 hand, changing her dress in a moment,
 appeared in her former apparel.

The astonished husband, viewing her
 with the sharp eyes of suspicion, per-
 ceived she was certainly a female, and
 continued to labour at the swing.

But Simabi, having effected her de-
 sign, resigned her place to Mabooba,
 who repeated the same trick, at which
 the husband was some what startled,
 but was rallied for his jealousy by his
 wife.

It was now thought convenient, that
 the Brahmin should begin to exhibit
 his skill. He accordingly mounted the
 swing, posting himself close to Sherire.

* * * * *

When

When they they had fixed themselves in a proper position, the Brahmin, according to his instructions, stripped off his female apparel, and appeared in his proper garb.

“What nonsense is all this,” said the husband: “have you no more tricks to play? Do you think me such a simpleton as to be thrice deceived by the same bait? Not quite such a fool neither. No, no, this is a stale trick; if you can perform nothing better than this, I would not give an *Aṇa* * for your comedy.”

So saying, he pushed the swing on the Brahmin's side: he happened to be
* * * *; Sherire, cried out,
“Do not be so lazy, my dear; indeed
“you do not give us half swing: A

* A sixteenth part of a Rupee.

“ little more! — my dear husband, —
 “ more — more! how my head runs
 “ round! — Stop, stop, stop!”

“ What is the matter?” said the husband: “ Did you not desire me to push
 “ forward the swing?”

“ O yes,” replied she, “ but I thought
 “ you would have pushed it up to
 “ heaven; and you know, my dear,
 “ I love you too well to think of part-
 “ ing with you so early: O, what a
 “ happiness it is to be married to such
 “ an indulgent husband!”

“ Well!” said the prince, laughing,
 “ this surpasses every thing; but go on
 “ with your story, and let us know the
 “ rest of the Brahmin’s adventures.”

Next morning, the Brahmin having
 returned thanks to his kind instructresses,
 turned his face to his own home, de-
 termined to be no longer a dupe to fe-
 male

male artifice, for he now considered himself a complete master, in the mysteries of the tiria bede.

When the sound of his well-known tread was heard on his own threshold, his wife ran out to embrace him, stiffling him with kisses of deceit. But he had acquired sufficient experience to doubt the sincerity of woman. In spite of his endeavours to dissemble, he made but aukward returns to her love.

The evening being spent in careffes, as soon as he prepared for bed, his wife began to remind him of the unfortunate oath she had taken, and hoped he was now fully master of the mystery of the tiria bede.

“Thanks be to all the gods and
 “goddeffes,” said the Brahmin, “I have
 “at last obtained my desire, and you
 “may

“ may now go and claim your bet;
 “ for I am master of all the bedes.”

On hearing these words, she pretended to be transported with joy; and intending to have some fun with her husband, dispatched a slave with a message to the banker's wife, who was her confidant in all her intrigues, and to the Shroff, who was one of her gallants. They accordingly obeyed the summons, and welcomed the Brahmin's return. These ceremonies were no sooner over, than Mahrana addressed the Shroff to this purpose.

“ You will be so good as to excuse
 “ me, good sir, for troubling you at
 “ this unseasonable hour; but I could
 “ not possibly delay a moment in hav-
 “ ing this long-depending wager de-
 “ cided; and if the lady will trust to
 “ your decision, as you are a learned
 “ Brahmin

“ Brahmin yourself, well versed in all
 “ the mysteries of the bedes, you
 “ may examine my husband relative
 “ to the grand secret of the tiria bede,
 “ in which I doubt not but you will
 “ find him an adept.”

The banker's wife agreeing to this proposal, the Shroff prepared to examine him, and to give impartial decision upon this important matter. He desired the ladies to retire, as these mysteries were disclosed to the holy tribe only.

The Brahmin all this while sat silent, and seeing into the bottom of this whole contrivance, was meditating the means of revenge. Consenting at last to the examination, the ladies retired, leering at one another, and posted themselves by a chink in the wainscot, to be delivered

livered of the child of curiosity, in observing the Brahmin's performance.

The Shroff having secured the door, and examining every corner of the apartment, advanced towards the Brahmin, and told him he might now begin, for he was assured they were in perfect safety.

The Brahmin putting his hand in his pocket drew forth an ivory ball, on which the letters of the alphabet were written, for his instruction, in the days of his youth^a: Presenting it to the Shroff, he desired him to hold it in his teeth. The Shroff was somewhat astonished, but desirous to see the end of the jest, he put the ball to his mouth, and extending his jaws, placed it between his teeth.

^a This is a common practice in India, to teach children while they play.

When the Brahmin saw the ball in that situation, he struck it with the back of his hand; it fell back into the throat of the poor Shroff, who was almost strangled, while he endeavoured in vain to withdraw it.

In the mean time, the Brahmin raising his right hand, struck him with one blow to the floor, then throwing a noose round his neck, hoisted him to a beam of the house till he had almost deprived him of life. He then let him down to the ground on his tiptoes; and having fastened the end of the rope, laying hold of a whip, told him: — “ Every letter of the tiria
 “ bede is now in your mouth, and if
 “ you do not pronounce them pro-
 “ perly, you must suffer for your in-
 “ tended imposture.”

Accordingly,

Accordingly, the Brahmin proceeded, letter by letter, to examine the Shroff, accompanying every blunder with a stroke, while the poor Shroff could no more pronounce a letter of the alphabet than a dancing bear, which in a great measure he now resembled.

When the Brahmin had sufficiently amused himself with this farce, he took the candle, singed the Shroff's beard, and began again to hoist him up to the beam. The women, afraid for his life, rushed in to save their gallant, lengthening their vociferous tongues upon the Brahmin, and threatening him with the claws of their fury.

The Brahmin, fearing their rage, drew a dagger from his girdle, and swore that as the wager was won, if the Shroff did not instantly pay him

him down twenty thousand rupees; he would certainly bury the steel in his body.

As the Shroff was a man of great wealth, his ancestors having been usurers from time immemorial, he would have parted with twice that sum to get fairly out of the hands of the Brahmin. He made signals of consent. The Brahmin wrote out an order, to which the Shroff set his seal, which being dispatched to his office the money was produced in gold, and the Shroff was permitted to extract the ball at his leisure.

This business being concluded, it was now the time of rest; but the Brahmin's wife, having that night a particular assignation on her hands, burnt with the thoughts of disappointment; for

finding that the Brahmin had improved so much by his journey, she doubted her power of deceiving him. However, as the horse of desire was not to be curbed by the hand of reason, she determined to risque the leap, and concerted the means with her companion.

When this loving couple had gone to bed, and the duty of the night was performed, the Brahmin, fatigued with his journey, fell snoring into the arms of sleep.

In the mean time the banker's wife, whose husband was absent upon business, stole privately into the room, and relieving the Brahmin's spouse, took upon her to perform her duty, while she should be absent with her lover.

During this interval the Brahmin awoke.

The

The spirit of inclination again began to move in the tree of life; and, like our first parents, after some recreation in the garden of Eden, in planting the young scions of hope, the Brahmin began in the hour of relaxation to talk to his lovely partner.

Restrained by the fear of discovery his companion refused to reply, which by degrees raised the resentment of the Brahmin. He swore by all his gods, that he would conjure that contumacious spirit of dumbness out of her. He drew his Chinger * from under his head. He seized the unhappy woman by the nose, and cutting off its point, bound her with his turban to the bedstead, throwing himself down on the

* A kind of knife.

bed in all the agonies of contending passions.

In the mean time, the weeping woman, still faithful to her absent friend and her own reputation, guarded her lips against discovery, so that the Brahmin towards morning fell asleep. At that instant his wife returned from her gallant, and stumbling upon her companion in the dark, imagined she was certainly discovered ; but whispering softly in her ear, she asked her how the night had passed.

“ Happy for you,” replied she, “ but, “ alas ! how unhappy for me ! — my “ poor nose is gone : yet in spite of this “ worst of misfortunes, we are yet un- “ discovered by your husband.”

Informed of these circumstances she untied her companion, and desired she
herself

herself might be bound in her place. All this being accordingly done, she began to make bitter lamentations, till she perceived she had awakened her husband. She than began to pray: “Im-
 “ mortal gods! who explore the deep
 “ secrets of the heart, and whose all-
 “ seeing eyes pierce the thick veil of
 “ darkness, if ever my pure feet
 “ strayed from the paths of chastity,
 “ or these weak hands broke the ma-
 “ trimonial chain; if ever my affec-
 “ tions were the property of a stran-
 “ ger, or the skirts of my honour de-
 “ filed; let me thus remain an ex-
 “ ample of incontinence, and a spec-
 “ tacle of horror and shame.

“ But if my feet have not stumbled
 “ in the ways of uprightness, nor my
 “ eyes shed the stream of desire; if
 “ my affections have concurred, with

“ my duty, and the skirts of my chastity are as snow; let me be a miracle of divine justice, and a proof of the power of innocence, which violence can never affect.” Here she paused awhile; at length she exclaimed:

“ Great gods! ye are just and merciful! my nose—yes, my nose is restored! now you have broke the sword of injustice, and exalted the standard of my triumphant fame: now shall my virtue appear with redoubled lustre, and the four winds of heaven be the sweet conveyers of my lasting praise.”

“ The woman is mad,” said the Brahmin, starting from his bed, and running for a light; but what was the greatness of his astonishment, when he found her possessed of her nose! — Having felt it, and found it stuck fast,

he

he lifted his eyes to heaven, and ascribed it to divine power; so imploring a thousand times her forgiveness, he clasped this fair bride of chastity in his arms, and with the excess of his succeeding joys defaced the remembrance of the past.

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